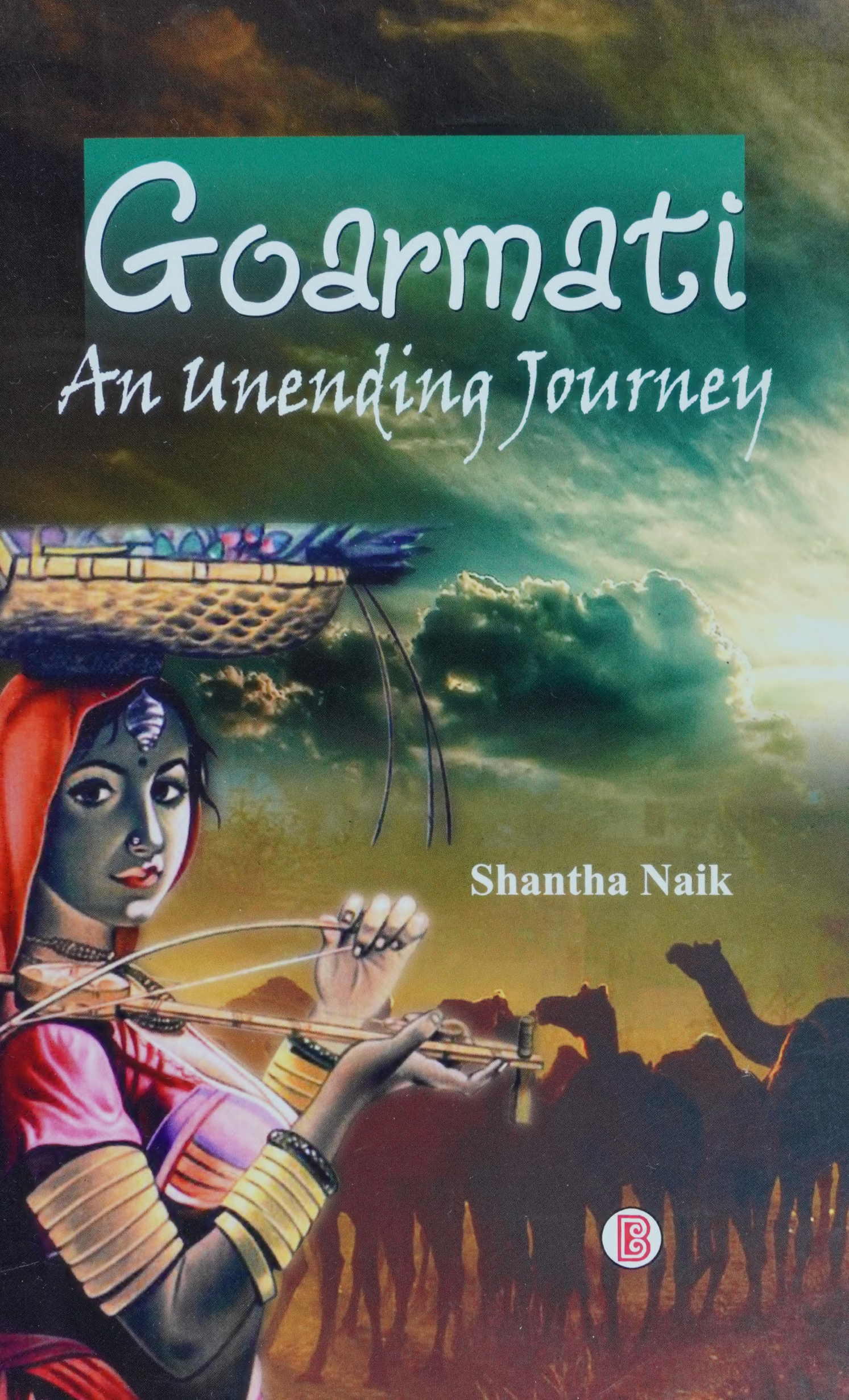
# Goarmati

## An Unending Journey



Shantha Naik

# GOARMATI

## An Unending Journey

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## An Unending Journey
### (Novel)

# Preface

Writing in the language which is not our mother tongue is very difficult, that too in creative writing. As I have been writing novels in Kannada language, I put in my effort to write in English. Writers of the world language know the fact that they should reach the larger mass. We read and understand Greek Classics in English. World has come to know about Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Kafka, Camus and world's best writer through English language which is widly read and understood.

Whatever may be the language and whatever may be the theme of Literature, it has a common feeling, common experience and most common expression. Though my novel is based on Banjara tribe which is the single largest tribe surviving in the world. More than 10 lakhs Gypsies have been massacred by the most inhuman monster, Hitler. Most of them were Banjaras. In the colonial and post colonial India, they migrated to the other parts of the world. Banjaras are Gypsies. Earlier they were nomadic tribe. There is large amount of oral literature available to support that they were business people. But there is no historical evidence available

to construct their history. During colonial rule, they were treated as 'notified tribe'. How can the native dwellers be the criminals? This is a systematic strategy of colonial ruler to snub the Banjaras and take the total business into their hands. Though Govind Banjara fought against Britishers in the border of Rajasthan and Gujarat and defeated them for a while, it is not recorded anywhere and remembered. Though Banjara Bheema Naik helped Tippu Sultan during forth Anglo-Mysore war, there are no historical documents to reveal these historical facts. Nehru, while writing history of India, who included all tribes of India in his book *Discovery of India,* did not mention any piece of reference about Banjaras. It is a systematic erasing of a particular tribe from the memory of the people. Today Banjaras are leading the worst kind of life of labor and poverty forces them to sell their female babies. How many Banjaras have concern towards their community? They have to come forward to retain their language, culture and tradition intact.

**Dr. Shiraganahalli Shantha Naik**

Hunger is the manifestation of all creatures in this village. Young and old were haunted by the urge of nature. Kakapura is a very tiny village in the map of India. The plans of the government, including all its benefits, never reach the village. It is obvious in India that people believe Central governments implementations are like a huge mass of iceberg. When it starts from Delhi, half of the iceberg melts there itself. The remaining half is sent to the state. Half of this melts at state level. When it finally reach the real beneficiary, it reaches in the form of a minute drop. Kakapura village is also one such Indian village where there are no roads, healthcare, electricity, recreation etc. The poor people walk at least three to four kilometers to catch a bus to go to the nearby city. It is a part of their life; most of the dwellers in the village do not have a piece of land; three hundred and sixty five days they depend upon the wages they earn. Though there is a big water tank near the village, the lands belong to the land lords and wise people of Dundatoor. Every summer the tank gets dried, people of Kakapura go to the tank in search of fish probably hidden in the muddy water. The crows try to catch the crab which is peeping out of the loamy mud cracks. Small kids pluck the tender leaves of a creeper and put them into their mouths to quench their hunger. It looks like a competition held between the cattle and human beings. Hunger is a big issue

of the village. The cowherds munch long sweetish fruits of *Bunni* trees. The fruits are favourite to the goats. There are seventy six houses in Kakapura. Gothanaik belongs to the tribe which was earlier nomadic. Now his father Kheemaji naik decide to settle down at Kakapura. Kheemaji along with his four brothers and a sister travel on the back of oxen from South-east part of India. But there is a long history of their journey which is not revealed because of many reasons. His three brothers continued their journey towards North; his sister died on the way. Her body was buried on the way and marked something on that. Now they have decided not to travel back. Kheemaji senses that Kakapura village has majority of his community people. So, he goes to the head of his community Naik. "Sir, I belong to your community. Can you allow me to stay with you"? He requested. Generous Naika, without any second thought, "why not?", noded his head and continued, "see there is enough space beneath the small neem tree, please go and build your hut and start a new life". He continued twisting of the rope. Kheemaji was very happy; he half way ran and walked to convey this massage to his wife, Gujari, who was minding her oxen and cows along with her two male and a female child. Her Elder son, Gothanaik, is just six years old followed by younger, Peeku and her daughter, Jugali.

"What is the news? Has the Naika agreed to give a place to settle down in Kakapura?" She does not allow him to open his mouth. Kheemaji is just opposite to her. He is very calm, gentle and generous fellow. He calmaly expresses Naika's acceptance. Immediately, she rushed to open the box where she has kept an axe, sickle and other implements. Both husband and wife go to the stream to cut long wood and large grass so that they can erect a hut on the place given by the Naik. Nobody knows the history of Kakapura because all his community people have come and settled down one by one from different parts of India. But originally they all have travelled from Rajasthan. Earlier, they were all business people; loaded their goods on the herds of oxen's backs and

travelled all over India. Main business was salt, grossary and other items. When British colony started its business on a large scale and after industrial revolution caused for the invention of locomotive, the poor Banjaras incurred loss and stopped their business. The British took their help while extending their colonial rule in India and called them traitors after their work was over. The Banjara were fixed in the nexus of notified tribe. Kheemaji, a voiceless man, established his domain at Kakapura. The other community people of Kakapura were happy with him. But his own community people felt irked. Kheemaji is such a innocent person that he does not know the difference between right and wrong.

Gujari started her career successfully with the help of her elder son, Gothanaik. Gothanaik has a challenging profile. He never compromises with the septum. Whatever he wants, he achieves it. But his younger brother Peekunaik is not as strong as Gothanaik. The girl Jugali is quite strong like her mother. She always shouts even for minute things. Gujari has a vision of her family life. In the beginning she goes to work in the field of Dundatoor upper caste landlord, Kittannabhat. After an observation of her son's dedication and honesty in the work, Kittannabhat gives a piece of his paddy land to him to cultivate. Half of the share he has to give to the owner of the land and the other half he can retain. Bhat offered him young bulls from his herd. So, Gotha considers Bhat as his God. When he started cultivation with two gifted oxen, it was very difficult for him to cope up. But his speedy recovery surprises the people around him.

To begin a new life is not a seat of roses or even the throne of a king. It is like a seat of thorns. Many people comment, some give advice, some criticize, even some irritate. One must not loose one's temper. Though Gothanaik is a angry young man, his temper controlled his anger when people had said something on his face. He learnt it from Kittannabhat. A young, wise man always keeping a smile on his face. He talks about morality, punctuality, sincerity by

giving enourmous examples quoting from the great Hindu epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The character of Rama and Dharmaraya are identical and they must be the role models to every youth in India. Rama's pleasing nature and hard work gave him credibility in his world. Dharmaraya who speaks only truth is also a great personality. Gothanaik, wishes to spend most of his time with Kittanna. "Master! why cannot you say some thing about Rama?" he stops his bullocks and pleads before him. "Oh! Gotha do not you have any work, I will tell you afterwards do not ask now." He tries to slip off. But Gotha is quite adamant, he was not convinced by that, he presses Kittanna to speak about Rama. Kittanna's mind was a blurr.... He was not willing to start the story but he could not escape from the situation. Kittanna is a principled, well behaved, disciplined man; young and old of Dundatoor respect him. Not because of his appearance but for his personality and scholarship.

If he starts, any work, he will complete it with the great care. Even if he begins to speak, he never Ieaves any wrong impression to the listener. Hence, he was in a dilemma. He started, "Do you know Gotha story of Ramayana for butter milk?" There was silence. "How can I, Master! I am an illiterate shudra, whatever knowledge I have now is given by you". He saw the sky. "No, no, I do not agree with you, you are like Ekalavya, who became a great archer without any teacher". He tries to see his face. "Do not compare me to that great man master, I am a poor layman". He was not convinced by the words of his master. "Don't tell like this my boy, you do not know your strength. You will rule this village in the future". He tries to impress him. Gothanaik did not understand how to reply to these words of Kittanna. Further Kittanna continues, "you Gothanaika, you have that dedication which normally we people possess. Education is attained through dedication and money is accumulated with mere care. These two qualities you have". He tried to read the brightness which shone on Gothas black face. "I don't know master. I cannot understand your scholarly speeches",

he replied. Gotha try to remember the words of Kenchajja, of his fox-like quality and the dedication of a priest. "You know, they never sleep while they read". Some of the school going boys were amazed by hearing these words of Kenchjja. "Is it true grand old man? How come this happens?" they try to pose a thousand questions to him. Clever Kenchajja who is a close associate of some Brahmins said, "we are sudras. We work physically in the field inside and outside the house. But they, the Brahmins, refuse to do physical work. Physical work needs more sleep. Their fathers and for-fathers have this gene which never allowed them to sleep while reading but we can't read continuously for-one hour. This is the difference between them and us". Gotha laughed alone. Kittanna did not notice this. The cart had already reached in front of Lord Anjaneya's temple. Behind the temple, a palacious house was built, which belongs to Kittanna now, Gothanaik who is a small boy wide-opened his mouth in surprise "Kawdaghar?-" (my goodness what a big house) may be the village people can sleep soundly without the irritation of bugs, mosquitos, the murmuring sounds of cattle, dogs, sheep, goats, hens and other living creatures inside the small hut.

It took Gotha few days to forget the house of Kittanna. Immediately going in to deep sleep, he dreamt of previous rainy season and his thatched hut leaking. His mother took all her three children on her lap and sat in a dry place till dawn. His father Keemaji too was awake and spent his time smoking half smoked Faiz beedies. There were only two black tile houses in the entire village. One belongs to the Kota naik, the Hattinaika who is the leader of the village, and the other one belongs to the Kannada speaking-Sidda. All other houses are built of the long grass which is available in the tank. The villagers go into the stream where it is muddy, and half sunk inside the loose mud to cut the tall grass to cover their huts. Kheemaji and Gujari have no dreams of their lives. But ambitious Gothanaik, though poor in life, has his own dreams about his future life.

The two male calves given by Kittanna bhata are old enough to plough. He has separated them from the herd and taken them to graze on the boundary and borderless cultivated fields. As they grew, Gothanaik also changed physically. On the day of Naraka chaturdasi, he took his bullocks to Husensabi, who is an expert in castration of the young oxen. There was a big queue. Gotha naik woke up early morning at 5 am and cleaned the shed, took his bullocks to the tank and scrubbed and washed them. Later he goes to the Neem tree pyol, where a goat was sacrificed. He dipped his left hand's little finger, by doing so he saw the blood. It is tradition amongst Banjara's. On every naraka chaturdasi day they have to see blood, it was a practice followed by his ancestors. On that day some people steal. Some people go early in morning and pluck marigold to decorate the doors of their houses, and especially to decorate their bullocks, normally they steal from others fields, on that day, to test whether their theft is ditected. If they succeed in this, the whole year they will not be caught by any one. These are all the beliefs the banjaras have and they have been practiced too.

Gotha naik is very anxious of castration of his young bullocks because Naraka chaturthi is the only auspicious day for this. Husensabi is very busy on that particular day in the whole year. Kakapura, Kodatti, Tanglagudi, Timbangeri and Sakanahalli villages are adjacent to each other. Kakapura is the centre of all the other four villages. After independence, when general elections were introduced, Kakapura was the first polling station. All the four villages people used to cast their votes here. Hence, Husensabi got wide publicity. All villagers like to have their own native breed of calves to be tamed for agriculture. Some of them have buffalos to cultivate their lands. This was the main reason why sabi was well known in that area. People easily book him by giving a toddy bottle or a five rupee note in advance as payment. Gotha naik has to wait his turn. Sabi takes five to ten minutes for each animal. After that, he applies turmeric powder

mixed in Castrol oil so that it does not get infected. There will be a swelling; to reduce the swelling, the animals are taken to the tank for swimming. They are given cottons seeds, horse-gram mixed with jawar, ragi or maize. They have to be taken to tank every day for swimming. They are moved to graze on fresh grass. Within no time, they recover and get the stamina to drive loaded carts, and work hard in the field. "Gotha Naika, bring your young calves" Huseni invited, "Yes brother, I am ready". He drove his calves, when they did not follow his words, he uses the whips on their back. Their horns are straight, It was not easy to control them. "It is difficult to control the young devil Gotha". Huseni was worried. "Why brother? What is the reason? You are the master, you have subdued elephant sized bullocks, and these two are just silly." He tried to flatter. "Yes, I know how to subdue them. But the problem is if the rope is not tied, these little devils will jump on us." Huseni revealed some of his tricks. "Then what do I do brother?" Goth expressed his helplessness. "Do not be panic young man, I know how eager you are to build your life in Kakapura. I heard many elders talking about you". consoled Huseni. Gothanaik did not have words to say; Huseni's words moved him. "Take this rope and tie it round the calf". He directed Gothanaik. He spoke to his animals to sooth them " Ho, ba.... Pla...." Gotha tried to divert the calves and obey him. When the rope fell on its back, it suddenly jumped and tried to run. The young people who were chit-chatting nearby immediately came to his rescue. Some of them caught its horns, someone caught its face and two or three of them completed tying the rope around it. "Yes! Now, leave it to me". Huseni, took the rope which was round middle and pulled it so tightly that the young calf could not tolerate the pain; it cried "amba" and suddenly fell down on the floor. "Tie the fore legs and hind legs immediately" Huseni cried. Accordingly they tied its legs with a piece of rope. Gothanaik was jumping to see the way Huseni, controling the bullock so easily. He took the hard bamboo sticks tied on either side and goes near the testicle of the bull. He took testicle and

put it in between the split bamboo. Slowly he pressed. The young calf tried to rise, but its legs were tightly tied. Helpless creature cried loudly," amba amba". Huseni, mercilessly finished his job. The calf cried loudly in pain. He applied turmeric powder dipped in Castrol oil on the operated organ.

"The young claves refuse to eat anything for a couple of days as they were in severe pain", Hussein told. They won't touch a blade of grass until the pain reduces. In the afternoon, the bullocks started eating grass and drink water. Gotha took them to the tank and put them into the deep water to swim so that the swelling may decrease. He fed them horse gram and maize mixture.

After six months, the pair of bullocks became healthy and strong, and started tilling work. On weekends, he hired a cart to load the ground nut from Harpanahalli to B.T.Jin. There was no road from Kakapura to Harpanahalli. A big row of twenty carts travel from the nearby villages and join at the main road to load the peanut from Harapanahalli. In the long journey, they cannot sleep but only take a nap. Meanwhile they manage to wake up at right time. Every cart has a kerosene lamp tied at the beam of the yoke. The bell sound of the bullocks disturbs villagers' sleep for a moment. Gradually it disappears as the carts move on. Gothanaik was the youngest one to drive the cart. The Road was not good, huge trees were there on either side of the mud road. A small passage takes them to Harpanahalli ; they relax for a while after reaching the place where they have to load. After loading the gunny bags, they have their breakfast of dry jawar roti and chutney which is brought from home with dry bangada fish fry they had. They wet the bread, dipping it in the water and eat with the smell of bangda. For half an hour, they leave their bullocks to graze in the forest. Again they continue their journey. They reach Davangere B.T.Jin at four-o clock in the evening ; unload the peanut bags, collect their rent of five rupees. When they receive their rent, their face blooms with joy. B.T.Jin is near cotton mill; they

have to cross many roads in the city to reach the main road which leads towards their village. On the way to water well circle, they stop their carts under the big umbrella tree to have their lunch at five. All cart drivers are quite old, even some youngsters also join them in the toddy shop.

Pay half an anna to get a bottle of toddy. Some of them pick up the bottle and some wait for the empty earthen pot to pour the bottle to consume in a gulp. "ye, son, what is life" someone says. "Nothing, nothing. Just drink and be merry; beyond this, nothing is there". Another adds his opinion. "Hello, excuse me, give me one more", he tries to stand up and tremble "O.K. I am ok do not panic brother, it happens sometimes". The fellow somehow manages to go near the man who is in charge of the shop. "Mr. give me a plate of brain curry". One fellow pays money and gets it for taste. Someone purchases baked curry of sheep's intestine, lungs and other items as sides. Gothanaik, tightly ties the five rupees at the edge of his dhoti and puts it inside, he just witnesses everything which happens in his vicinity. "Gothanaik , do not drink, you are a very good boy, keep it up, you .... .keep it up". His co-cart driver Shankanaik unconsciously told. Gothanaik did not respond. He requested Jantanaik to mind his cart and bullocks for a while so that he can go to the market close by to the clock tower to purchase grocery for the home. "Janta, da please, I will come with in no time". He rushed to the market, purchased red chilli, onion, garlic, brinjal, and other spice items which his mother had asked him to bring. Walks fast to reach the place. When he reaches, all are getting ready to yoke the bullocks. Gothanaik put yoke on his bullocks which are munching the grass.

When the bullock carts reach, the corner of the hills of Kondajji, all carts were stopped, the elder among all, Sanunaik advised, "see guys, go slowly, the spot is most dangerous, there is a big devil hiding behind that huge boulders. Every one shouts loudly together. At the time when you reach the spot, Understand". Gotha's heartbeat

speeds up after hearing the words of Sanunaik. He became nerves and numb. Sanu realized this truth, so immediately he called Gothanaik. "ye!, Gothanaik, do not get tensed, we are twenty people, we can kill any damn, I do not believe all these evil spirits, but people tell all these nonsense things. Do not worry". He encouraged him. "O.K. uncle Sanu;, I am fine. You are with us know. Why should I get afraid of an evil creature no.....no...." and pretended that he was couraged enough to manage the situation. They all shouted ... at a time, .... The sound echoed seven times so loudly that even the village of the other side of hill might have heard their voices. Nothing happened to anyone. Gothanaik did not forget to remember his favourite house gods, Tirupati Timmappa and Sevabhaya, in his mind at least thousand times.

It was twelve, midnight. Gujari was waiting for her son's arrival. Kheemajii is worried about his immatured son, Gotha. Peeku and Jugali started snoring in the corner of the hut. Ho.... Pa. Pa..... ye..... Nandi..... Kurvati.....Ye son of a bitch..... can't you stop immediately" he scolds his bullocks. Hearing her son's voice, Gujari rushed out of the house. "slow my dear, why is it so late? what happened to you all? I was scared about you", she expressed without taking breath. "Unloading took much time, and you know our people when they go out, how they spend money and behave like savages. Drink toddy and eat mutton without bothering about their people at home", He described the scene at the toddy shop. "That is why, I was afraid, whether you too would follow them. Look my dear son this world is very cruel. People cannot tolerate if they see a honest, hard working man in the village. Don't come under their fold. Stay away from these rascals. They are all house breakers". She starts a small lecture. Gothanaik nods his head. Some of his mothers words he received promptly and some he ignored.

## II

Kakapura is built under the raised border of the tank, it covered almost two hundred acres. There are several

stories of Kakapura's tank. It was built during the British rule in India. It is so strong that once when there was continuous rain for a whole week and many mud houses collapsed, the tank was intact. Seven big and small tanks built on the upper side of the existing Kakapura tank had been devastated by the force of rain water. Water roared like sea. An unfortunate marriage party, selected a short cut to avoid a long distance they go on the mud route via tank. The bullock carts crossed the first stream; when they came to the middle of the stream, immediately the water rushed forcefully and the complete line of bullock carts drowned in the water. The whole marriage party was drowned along with the bride and bride groom. Next day morning, more than hundred dead bodies were found floating on the water. The outer edges of the tank were over flowed. When the muddy water reached the river Thugbhadra, all kinds of fish rushed against the flow of the water. Young and old from Kakapura and other nearby villages ran hither and thither to catch fish in the stream; all the nearby villages celebrated a festival of fishes. It remained in the memories of the people for long time.

The rain was pouring day and night and it did not allow people to go for nature call. They used gunny bags to cover their heads and bodies by folding its corners. The village barber Chandrappa's son, Huchhengi, goes for toilet behind the bushes of thorn fruit. He managed to sit in a dry place. He took a half smoked beedi and lit it, and had a puff. His sight fell on the raised bank of the tank, and with shock he becames speechless. He got up and hurriedly tied the knot of his knickers and ran to inform his people that the raised bank of their tank has got a crack and water is forcefully flowing out. Huchhengi, in a shock, could not explain to his people. He just made some signs. Kenchajja, the elderly man asked, "Huchhengi, tell me what is the matter" calmly. "that - this water....." and he is unable to speak. Kenchhajja got angry, he was fed up with the water pouring from the sky as if the whole sky had permanent holes. "You idiot what

nonsense are you saying"? He gave him a slap on his cheek. Huchhenji came out of the shock and become normal. "Grand father, you know the raised bank of the tank has got a crack and the water is rushing out in full force at path, near that sweet mango tree". People started running towards sweet mango tree before he even completes his words. They started crying, whistling shouting. Some of them rushed to the village to evacuate all who are still unaware of the truth. It was done within no time. Gujari and Kheemaji picked up the things within the reach of their hands and loaded on the newly purchased bullock cart. Within no time, the raised tank was devastated by the inflow of water. Animals and human beings of Kakapur went to a safe place and silently witnessed their houses floating on the water.

The rain was still pouring and people of the whole village gathered near palm tree Durgamma temple. Bandamma, a poor widow, could not control her emotions. She came forward and caught hold of Hattinaika Kota's neck, she covered her face and started weeping describing the whole scene in her own words,

"Father, we have lost our village

The great village which was built by our fore-fathers,

was completely destroyed by this monstrous rains.....

Where shall we go?.....

What shall we do?.....

Oh palm tree durgi..... what are you doing here by simply sitting?

Can't you protect us....."

Her cry was not yet completed when Handunaik said.

"What is this nonsense, we are worried about our lives and someone is crying. What Naikppa? can't you understand this". Because of his anger on that lady, persuade him to talk this way. Bandamma understood the evil intension of Handunaik. "you rogue, what do

you think yourself? Do you think that you will do whatever you wish. I know why you are saying all these. You! skin diseased dog, didn't you knock my door the other day? I will disclose the truth in front of all here". She was furious. Handunaik, felt embarrassed he did not expect this stubborn move from the lady. He was afraid of and searching for a way out of the incident. He was annoyed, bowed down his head, and tried to escape from the spot. Bandamma came forward and caught his hand tightly. Handu's face turned black and blue. "ye, you bitch, what are you doing? Can't you see, people are gathered here? How dare to touch my hand. Handu's wife Pani rushed, stared at them. You swine why are you holding my husband's hand? Can't you find some other man in this mass? Leave, I am warning you, leave him. Otherwise I will knock you down". She threatened her. "Pani, you don't know anything, keep quite". She was unable to continue her argument because Pani was known for her quarrelsome nature. Nobody took the risk of quarreling with this lady, even men did not argue with her. Bandamma turned cool. She straight away went near her old wooden box and sat.

Kechhanumajja asked the smokers to lend half beedi. "Common guys lend me one I am finding it difficult to bear this cold". No one was ready to give, because they all knew this old man who always borrowed but never returned. The Pujari of Lord Sevabhaya, Papanaik, immediately started nodding his head and shaking his body. "Hu.....ha.... My children do you understand now.... still more hard days are awaiting you all. This is the result of negligence by you. You haven't listened to me..... where is your village chief? Hu....hu.... Kotanaik are you sleeping? What is happening in your reign? No festival? no rituals? just folding your hands. Is it o.k. for you? I only brought this rain and cracked the raised shore of your tank. See what I will do further?" he shook his head.

"Oh! Mother of Kakapura, we rely on you, you are our protector, you protect our crops, our domestic animals and

our kids why mother? what is our fault? After all we are black headed human beings, you have the great power of vision, if at all we have committed any mistake forgive us". Hattinaik bowed and kneeled on his toes and requested her. People who gathered there also folded their hands and requested the palm tree Durgi.

"What happened mother, why are you telling all these things, our village is known for its devotion to you. I think you are mistaken?. We are not that kind of people. Take back your words". Gujari came forward to tell these words to goddess palm tree Durgi. "You are talking to me. you useless lady don't you know? to whom you are talking. You are not the one that belongs to Kakapura. You have migrated from a dirty place, Mind your tongue" Papanaik became furious. His rivalry with her son Gothanaik was expressed through this. Gothanaik became the obstacle in the village. All young and old have been burning for his hard work. Kenchajja was only the fellow who appreciated his talent, his dashing nature and he was mesmerized by looking at his fast movement, in the village. Pujari, the priest of Sevabhaya was waiting for an opportunity to hang him in public, and he did it on that day. "God! never jealous of any one. This is only the dirty priest's plot to condemn me." Gothanaik blasted him. The heat of the quarrel was raised and even the rain did not quench the heat. Young Gothanaik and old priest Pujari Papanaik, picked up the quarrel for long time. Godess Durgamma vanished from his body, only vulgar language poured from the both sides. They crossed all the limitations and decency and joined hands like two cocks fighting. People who gathered there were just witnessing like dumb spectators, no one went forward to separate them. Kenchajja is dumb and just witnesses their fight for a moment and then rushed to separate them. Meanwhile, Gothanaik knocked him down. Pujari Papanaik started shivering and raised his voice. Hattinaika, Kotanaik also came there and stopped them. "you people have no work to do. We haven't put food in our mouths and uttering god's name to solve the present problem. We must find an elevated place to rebuild our

thanda, but you people are playing drama in the open air theatre. What Gujari, In presence of you, your son is fighting with the old priest. 'Shame on your part'. I wasn't expected this from you". He took her to the task. Gujari started searching for the right words to convince the old Hattinaika. "No sir, it was not Gotha's fault. When the goddess is in one's body how can she target one particular person? Come on tell me? The Goddess of the palm tree Durgi loves everyone equally, but the old unwashed and unbathed priest started abusing my son, so he too lost his patience". Nobody is ready to agree and accept the priest's fault. "No he is old, and elderly, Gotha could have tolerated his words." Gotha did not mind whoever says he did what is right to him. He learnt from his mentor, Kittannabhata. "Whatever is true to your soul, do that? never believe in the howling mob. The mob has no brain, if you please them by any means, they will talk in favour of you. Hence, never rely tongues of such sweet people." He remembered the words his master once advied him.

The whole crowd moved towards the eastern side of the tank. Hattinaika had five acres of land there. Kenchahunumajja the wise man gave land but no one came forward to donate land to build the thanda. Khajapeer, the muslim gentleman who has two acres of land come to rescue the whole village. He openly announced. "All the elders of the Kakapur, listen, a I am ready to give my land for the sake of these small children: who are our future. I want development and progress of the village Kakapura. You all know that I have only two acres of land. That is all, but I believe in Allaha, he will help me". Khajapeer was confident and firm in his decision. His elder son, Mabuli, was annoyed, "Baba what are you doing" expressed his anguish. Dhulabsab his tenth son cut down his words. "Bhaijan Allah has given strength in our bodies and wisdom in our brains, that's all. It is not good to oppose our father. Whatever decision he has taken, there is some cause". The whole family accepts this decision and gives their land. Hattinaika and Kenchajja expressed

their helplessness. "Khaja, what have you done? You know my children. They are criminals so I did not take any risk" Kotanaik expressed his helplessness.

Gothanaik marked big piece of land near the big mound which was not touched by the people. He built a big hut, with the help of his father Kheemaji, his mother, Gujari and brother Peekunaika and sister Sugali. He started a new life in the newly established village. The weed grown in their crop and suppressed it in such a way that native variety of jawar did not raise. It became pale below the weed. Due to heavy rain, crops failed. The villagers unable to get few kilograms of grain out of the field. Hattinaika's house was built just behind Kheemaji's house. His wife Dhondi has good relation with Gujari; she comes every now and then to ask for something or the other from Gujari. "Gujari do you have red hot chilly? kindly spare me a dozen in number. The stupid rain has devastated everything, in hurry I did not remember to take the bag filled with chilly". She started weeping. "Oh mother-in-law, even my position is also the same but somehow my son managed to pick up half a bag, take few and return". She counted red hot chilies and handed over to Dohndi. The life is gearing up in Khakapura as usual. Banjaras, Kannada speakers and Muslims all are re-united. There is no clash or conflict of any kind is found in the village. Gotha's new beginning was not normal like all other dwellers of Kakapura. He sent his younger brother Peekunaik to school run by the government at thanda Durgamma's temple. Sathappa who was the single teacher gathered four-five boys and girls to teach Kannada alphabets and arthematics. Few improved, but Peeku never showed interest in learning. When Sathappa, the school teacher asks, Peeku to tell Kannada alphabet, he imitates him.

"Peeku, tell 'A'

"Teacher tells 'A' Peeku repeats

You rascal imitating me,

Peeku says, "you rascal imitating me" Sathappa, fed up with the adamant boy, complained to his father Kheemaji

and his brother Gothanaik. His mother Gujari told Gotha, "son, he will never learn anything, why are you pouring water on the hard rock. Stop sending him to school and purchase few more buffalous and cows and start a animal husbandry" Gothanaik is pleased with his mother's advice. He went to Kittanna for loan, borrowed some money and bought some animals. Peeku stopped going to school and started helping his brother.

At Four in the morning, Gotha and his mother woke up to clean the cowsheds and milking the cows. Gotha runs to deliver milk at Telugi village which is three kilometers away from Khakapura. He returns at 6 o' clock at the second cock's crow. Kenchanumajja, just woke up and whipped his both hands with a pray, "O lord Shevbhaya, protector of the universe kindly protect me" and whipped them on his face to open his eyes. He found a dark shadow moving in front of him. He shouted with a tremble in his voice, "Who is that?" waited for the reply. "It's me uncle, Gotha" happily announced. "Oh son of a devil, where have you been so early" yawned. "I had been to Telugi to deliver milk to Rachaiah's hotel". He replied. "What!, been to Telugi and came back, one second, one second, repeat" he asked, "It is true uncle, I had been to Telugi". Gotha repeated the same. "Oh, my child, your parents must have done great things in their past to get a son like you". ..... he stopped breathing in between and released some but from the heart and continued "I too have, rascals, come and see how they are snoring", his voice was heavy. As he was uttering something, Gotha walked away, because his mother was waiting for him in his house to take the bullock cart to Harpanahalli and to Davangere.

It was Sunday morning. Gotha was milking the newly purchased buffalo which gave five liters of milk. His mother Gujari came out of the house to tell him something. She witnessed his face and forgot herself for a while. He was getting a moustache. She was thrilled and rushed behind the house to inform Dhondi her neighbor. "mother-in-law,

where are you? Come out". She said loudly. "What is the matter Gujari? why are you running like that"? "I cannot express my joy. Have you noticed Gotha's face?" she asked. "No, not in these days, I have not seen the poor chap, you never allow him to stay back in the house, always sending him here and there; what is the reason?" she was anxious to know why Gujari was so enthusiastic about her elder son Gothanaik. "You know, I am very happy today" she started dreaming." Oh, what is this Gujari? only you are enjoying the secret of your son. Can you tell me why are you so happy today?" She does not want to wait so long. "Certainly, I will tell you, that is why I have come to you. I have witnessed moustache on his face". again she started dreaming. "what is special in this?". Dondi went inside. Gujari felt disappointed with the words of Dhondi. She wanted to defeat like this. "What mother-in-law? Did you not understand the logic behind the moustache? He is....." She tried to explain the logic behind the mustache. Realized Dhondi, felt hurt, "O, that is the matter, I didn't understand, Then you will be mother-in-law soon". She laughed. "Do you have any girl in your mind whom you think suitable to my son and our family". She asked her immediately. "Ya, I remember, there is a girl who is ten years old. She will be very good match to your son Gotha. Motherless child. She has seven brothers and a sister, if you say yes, I will talk to my cousin, her father". She informed her. But there is a self interest in this information. Her cousin, Badkanaik lost his first wife. After giving birth of nine children, she died. He married again to have someone to take care of his children. Ponnibai-second in the row of his birth goes to rear the cattle along with Gurajji, Chaulpi, Sanu, Dumka are the other cowherds company. Gurajji and company early morning take their cattle to the nearby forest. The grass makes the cattle to graze without running here and there. All boys and girls go into the stream to catch fish. If not fish, at least they have crabs. In the afternoons, some days, they fry crabs and some days they cook curry. A boy and a girl have been sent to collect the afternoon lunch. The boy asks for bread in their

houses. They have a very good siesta in the afternoons. Every day, they eat curry or green chilly with fried fish or crab. Ponnibai keeps half her share to give to her father who deliberately waits for his daughter while going to the toddy shop. Badkanaik loves all her nine children and the children born to his second wife. He loves Ponnibai because of her motherly care towards all her brothers and father. When he got the news from his cousin Dohndi, he was happy. He sent a message to the boys house to come and complete the bride-looking ceremony. Within a week, Gujari found a day to visit Kanur. Four bullock carts they arranged to carry people to Kanur. Kanur is about twelve kilometers away from Kakapur. As this was the new relationship, Kheemaji and Gujari requested all the elders of their community as well as other community too, to accompany them to their elder son, Gotha's marriage and fixation. Some were willing to come, some escaped and some really showed interest. All the four bullock carts left Kakapur at 3' o clock; they had strong bullocks to drive the carts so, they took two hours to reach Kanur. When they reached, the sun had already set. Badkanaik welcomes them warmly. They all were sitting on the Pyol inside. Ponni rushed unaware of the people who came to see her. She shouted, "Father you know what happened today, we caught much fish but hadn't taken a vessel to cook so we fried the fish and stole some green chilies from Mushyappa's field, fried both in fire, and mixed with our fingers"... she stopped her words after sensing strange people inside the house. "what is the matter Ponni"—Dondi came out to stop their talk and be sensible in front of her would be in-laws. "Oh Dondi aunty, how are you? When did you come? How is uncle?" a hundred questions she asked her. But Dondi made a sign, not to speak like a talkative tortoise. She called and whispered in her ears. "Don't talk, your would be and his parents are here, stupid girl" she tapped on her head gently. Ponni felt ashamed. She ran out and escaped from the spot.

Badka arranged a case and big pot of toddy for the guests. The Chicken was ready. All men and women of

Kakapura gathered. An elder person of Kanur came forward with a proposal. "Mr. Kheemaji and Kota the leaders of Kakapura, as it is our age old tradition to offer you toddy, if you are willing to marry our Ponnibai, who is very innocent mother-less daughter. Kindly receive our offer please. If you say yes, send your boy to give fire to his father in-law's hooka. If not, no problem you just have our hospitality and happily depart tomorrow morning". Kota stood on behalf of Kheemaji. "Badakanaik and the elders of Kanur village, we are happy to announce that we agree to accept the proposal of Ponnibai to Gothanaik. And the boy will light his would-be-in law's hooka.

Here! he is coming". Then allowed Gothanaik to light his future in law's hooka. After that, he gave a pot of toddy and fell on his feet to receive his blessings. "God will give you hundred years age my son, wake up". Badaka whole heartedly blessed his son-in-law. He glanced and gazed his personality, though dark in complexion, he is attractive, and physically well-built. He will be a suitable bride-groom to his daughter. "Now discuss, your, giving and taking business" Kota again announced, "We don't have any demands. We are ready to pay a part of the expenditure. We take care of non-vegetarian food which is needed as our tradition. We bear expenses of boys and girls who go to get pots and pans and bride tax". He discloses openly, Badka was hesitating to talk. Gujari came forward and said, "Brother, I can understand your position. Not to worry, we will bear the expenses. We want your daughter that is all". Expressed her views like stick broken into two. Badka, just wide opens his mouth but all speech's chocked in his throat.

The marriage arrangements and preparations were going fast. Some one brought news that a new machine had come to grind the jawar, now no need to our women to sit and floor it in the grinding stones. Gujari puffed the air of relax. She asked her son Gothanaik to take two quintals of Jawar for floor and five gunny bags of paddy for rice. He took the bullock cart to Kadajji fifteen kilometers away from Kakapura

and got floor and rice so nicely. He was just dumb struck. When he saw the machine which was grinding corn within no time. They load some rice and floor to send to Kanur. Jaggery, betal nut, leaves tobacco, whatever is needed for marriage has been sent earlier.

Three days before the marriage, Kheemaji, Gotha and Gujari go house to house to invite the people to go to Davangere to have marketing. It is a tradition to go to market before marriage. Four white dhotis to the bride-groom, slippers to both, first day jaggery is mixed in water with some spices which is known as 'Ghota' which is a ceremony of bride-groom. Kota, Krishna, Kenchajja, Huseni, and many others got ready. The old priest still burning on his success, "what brother Kheemaji, I heard that you are going to bring a girl from Kanur? The same girl was rejected by my distant relative of Kodinatti. I was told this girl's character is not good, her family is also worst, I don't know why you have accepted this relation". He tried to create some fuss in Kheemaji's mind. Kheeemaji didn't understand how to reply. He mumbled, "I don't know sir, my wife selected that girl. You are a great man, know everything. Please come with us for marriage marketing". He requested him. "Oh, what is there, whoever comes take them, it is not necessary to accompany people like you, go on... ". Directly condemned the girl and Kheemaji's family. The sensitive Kheemaji worried about his son. He left the rest of the house and went in search of his wife to tell her the fact. She was calm till hearing the comment. Immediately, raised her voice against the old priest. "my foot, the old donkey, did he tell all these things? Come on, don't take serious of those nonsense words. He is jealous of this marriage. He doesn't want that innocent girl should marry our son". She convinced her husband. She herself was not much worried about that.

Ten bullock carts are ready to travel from Kakapura to Davangere. It was after noon, when they completed the marriage purchasing. Kheemaji and Gujari were very happy. They took all the guests to the toddy shop, ordered a full

case of toddy. "What do you want for sides?" the shop keeper asked. "I think, it is the brain, eye ball sukha, liver and small intestine curry is more suitable with some fish fry". Kota and Huseni placed the order. "Good selection" Hanumanaika prompted. The dry 'roti' brought from the house had been distributed, they dipped into the curry and drank four bottles of toddy each one. Kenchanumajja, glorified this as, "I will tell you Kheemaji" I have not experienced a party like this in my life. Not even ever heard about a nice party like this, no one has arranged this kind of party in surrounding villages; what do you say Kotaniak. He grinned "It is true, but you know Kencha, people who migrate from different places they only become prosperous. These people also, fifteen years ago, came to me, fifteen years ago asked a piece of land to build a hut to start their life. I gave them, they are outsiders," Kota expressed his difference which was not expressed all these years. "I don't agree with you Kota, we are all outsiders. Your father might have settled early but no one is native of Kakapura. Don't target the poor like this. I know you Banjara's never tolerate some one's progress". Though he is younger to Hattinaika, Kota, speka back. Kota raised the voice, "What? Huseni, do you know whom are you talking to? Mind your business. Don't interfear on elders' issues". He screamed. Kenchajja came to his rescue. "Come on Kota, why are you so much annoyed on that poor boy. He never opens his mouth on others' issues. But if he feels that it is true he never tolerates". Kota tried to stand up. He was unable to stand, Gotha came to hold and wake him up. He was completely unaware of the situation. "Kenchappa, what did you tell? I am not scolding anyone.... Leave me, I am fine, I am fine". He pushed Gotha and leaned here and there. He went almost to fall. Gotha went and held him. "Grand father, are you ok? Come on I will help and leave you where you want to go." Kotanaik was completely in trance.

He was talking to himself. Gotha took him to the bullock cart. He yoked the bullock. All the ten carts started moving

in a queue. It was almost midnight when they reached home. Peeku and Jugali were not asleep. When they heard the sound of bells of the bullocks, they rushed to the ground. "Mother, why are you late?" Jugali asked. "It was tedious my child, we had been to purchase marriage items you know. It is natural that it will be late always". Jugali simply noded her head in sleepy mood and carried the big bag of new clothes on her head.

Before the bride groom leaves his village to the brides place, they have many traditions to complete. The first one was, bride groom's relatives apply turmeric paste to the boy. The powder turmeric was mixed in coconut oil and kept it for few days, when it was mixed, all young and old men and women come and join their hands. The bride - groom along with his younger brother has to go to the *Vadaidag*, a traditional burning. The elder persons of the village heat the needle in the fire until it turns red and then they burn the shoulders of both the brothers. Banjaras believe that through this they give respect to the teacher. Tradition carried only among the equal number of brothers, otherwise, the bride-groom was accompanied by 'Namu Nalar', named cocount. women singing traditional songs. Immediately, jaggery and some spice are mixed. The bride groom turns round a turban to his head and goes to distribute the sweet water. If any relative of bride present in that occasion, he has to bend down to give the glass filled with sweet water. The relative teases the groom, "that is all, he does not have strength, Oh! he has lost his strength of the trunk, what kind of a man is he? How will he ever control our girl." He laughs loudly. His maternal uncle Dhanunaik came and asked Gotha to stand up. "leave it now, he is still tender. When he grows like you, then you see his strength". Revealed the fact, Gotha went outside the tent to distribute beetlenut and leaves to the women. His mother unable to control her feelings, rushed in between and caught his neck to express all her emotion attached with him and how he is going to brake all her bondages.

"My dear son... you never forget your beloved mother.

I was thinking that you would always help me

The movement when you were born, it was tremendous.

But son now you are departing and becoming others".

Dhondi came and removed the hand. "Control Gujari, he is going to get girl to help. He is not going any where, be happy and send him happily". Gujari unwillingly stopped her weeping. Dhanu who was assisting Gothanaik took him to Sevabhaya, Hanuman, Guddumma and village Chowdi temples; he offered betel nut and leaves. He just kept a leg outside the temple door; boys rushed into the temple to pick up the leaves and betel nut. All men and women come to give fare-well to the bridegroom and all stood near God stone hidden in the earth, received betel nut and leaves and then he offered betel nut and leaves to the half hidden stone god and sat in the bullock cart.

The sun was set, when the marriage party reached Kanur. When their cart reached ThandaDurga devi temple, a group of girls were awaiting to invite the bride groom by scolding.

Where do you come from dirty fellow?

Your sister is lame and limping

Mother is loose.....

Gotha covered his head with a red shawl. His maternal uncle Dhanunaik was holding a red bag bundled in a white bedsheet. Hattinaika's wife of Kannur thand had sent water and mat to the marriage party. After all ceremonies, bridegroom and his assistant, his uncle, go to dinner at Naika's house. First day comes to an end Gothanaik sleeps in the temple. Next day his father-in-law, Badka, invites the marriage party to his house. Every day there was a ceremony; it goes on upto a month.

The last day ceremony comes to an end with non vegetarian food. Bridegrooms father has to give them a goat or sheep. They cut it and prepare curry and invite important people for dinner. Badkanaik orders two cases of toddy, his

brother-in-law brought five pots full of arrack to drink. They completed the first course of drink with fried liver and ear of the goat. Remaining share, out of it, was sent to the women. The elderly women of Kanur reject the drink. "what do you think? Are we beggars? you made us to wait for four hours, Kotaniak tell me. Do you have similar practice in Kakapura?" bluntly asked. "sorry sister, kindly accept without the knowledge of Badka, it happened. Actually, he informed his son. I think he might have forgotten. Please don't make it an issue". He requested, "on behalf of Badkanaik, we are appologizing you. Come all women, let us have our share." She distributed bottles of toddy to every one and a piece of fried liver of a goat.

Gothanaik was worried about his paddy field. He promised Kittanbhat that he will give more yield this year. "what happened to my corner paddy field?" he was worried. One month he stayed in bride's house. The whole month of marriage, he ate copra, dates with ghee. He gained some weight and color. But he had hundred things in his mind. He is planning to purchase some land near his village. With his father and brother, he wanted to clear the forest land to cultivate. As other people of his village had already done.

It was almost afternoon; fifteen bullock carts carried the bride and bride-groom as well as their relatives and friends. When they reached Kakapur, it was dark. Girls of the village who had been to Bullur and Kudllur for days work, happily returned, straight away they came to the temple. Carts were half a kilometers away; they started scolding loudly.

Bride's mother is lazy
Bride is dark and dirty
Her brother is rogue

when the girls who accompanied the bride heard, as preventive tactice, they counter-attacked in verbal exchange. People gathered there, stopped and separated them. Kotanaik came forward to send the girls of Kakapura.

After hitting the nail on the bottom of the door, they invited bride into home. She keeps her right leg first to cross

the door step. There were no other traditional programmes remained on that night. Next evening after the lunch, women gathered to disclose what all the materials were given by her parents as gifts to the bride. "See, what kind of people they are? See the wooden box, a pair of glasses and plates". An elderly woman complains against bride's parent. "Sister, kindly don't blame, she is a mother-less girl. Her step-mother, you all know the problems of second marriages. Please accept whatever she has brought with her". Dhondi suddenly stopped them. It was inevitable Gujari to say yes, to the words of Dhondi. Next morning after first cock's crow, the bullock carts were ready to go back to Kanur. Ponni caught the neck of her brothers and relatives to express her helplessness as she was going to miss her home, parents once for all.

"My dear brother! never forget this poor sister. Whenever you remember me, come to see my face. Kindly you take care of father and mother" It was almost two hours she wept. Ponnibai lost her voice. "kindly stop crying, the girl get tired she was crying continuously from a week" her elder brother Dhakanaik angrily said. He forcibly took all the people of his village to the cart and asked them to get in. They waved their hands. She stands there till the carts are invisible to her sight. Ponni lost her identity, no mother, sister, father. A strange environment, strange people; she has to adjust with them.

Gothanaik became responsible now. His wife Ponni is an innocent, immature girl struggling a lot to adjust with the new circumstances. She never cooked food and grind the corn in stone. Gujari was worst at her part. She wanted to rule as a mother-in-law. When her own daughter Jugali was sleeping comfortably, she wakes up her daughter-in-law who is of the same age with her daughter. At first cocks crow, or when the polar star shines in the east, Ponnibai, gets exhausted and feels sleepy; keeps her head on the crushing stone and goes to sleep. Furious Gujari says "you bitch, what do you think? it is not your father's house to sleep till

morning come on! wake up" pulls her hair and throws water on to the face. Ponni feels shocked, again she starts grinding the floor with the heavy eyes. Before sun rises, she has to complete grinding and cleaning of the fire place by removing nights ash. She used to prepare rotti and some curry, green chilly chutiny and pore curd to a earthen pot to churn it. After half an hour of churning the curd, she has to extract the butter. With the sound of churning, neighboring boys come in without asking her permission to beg butter milk. Ponnibai strictly followed her mother-in-law Gujari's order and say, "It is not possible to give butter milk to your home. Because the calf is two months old after eating. In case you wipe your hands with cloth, the calf will start eating, cloth. So you can come here with malt; I will pour you butter milk, eat here and go, understand?" refused to give the butter milk. Disappointed boys and girls return homes scolding old lady Gujari. Some take a plate filled with Jawar or ragi malt and return immediately to Gotha's house, silently sit in the corner start eating with loud sound of *sur, sur*.

As the days have passed, there was a change in nature. Similr change is found in Ponnibai. Fourteen years Ponnibai became pregnant. Gujari was happy for that, she had not allowed Ponni to sit idle, harassed her like anything but her daughter, Jugali, was treated like princess. Every now and then, she started scolding Ponni. Ponni tolerated everything because of her father and family. Otherwise she could have left and gone out of that house long back. She became mother at the age of fifteen, without knowing what is going to happen to her. She becames pregnant again. Year after year, she bore seven children. Now Gujari thought to marry her daughter. Since she is the only daughter, she does not want to take any risk, she decided to marry her within the village. Thaku's son Jangunaik comes forward to marry Jugali. Gujari was very happy with this relation. She planned her only daughter's marriage in grand manner. Ponnabai does not feel anything with this marriage at least some burden will go off; earlier both mother and daughter made several

plots to harass her and succeeded. Now she can breath freely.

After a year of Jugali's marriage, Gotha and his mother planned to bring a bride to his immature son Peeku. Gujari wanted her younger son to settle down like her elder son, Gotha. She wanted to see grandsons from Peeku, too. They decided to bring a girl from the neighbouring village. Pani a tall young girl came to the house as a new bride, when marriage was fixed. Gothanaik's wife bore another child, so she didn't attend the marriage. Gujari has some smooth corners towards the second daughter-in-law who came newly to the house. After a month of delivery, Ponni had started her life as usual. Grinding, preparing food, washing, cleaning and going to the field to collect firewood. Pani started enjoying all privileges of a younger daughter-in-law. Gujari started giving more importance to Pani, the younger daughter-in-law from the day one; she speaks slowly, smoothly to her, when it comes to Ponni, she becomes wild and harsh.

"I have taken care of you and your children. I did enough service to you, when you bore children, now it is a turn of my younger son and his wife". Gujari speaks on the face of elder Ponni. Ponni tolerated everything for her small children. Kheemaji never opened his mouth to scold his in-laws. He is a noble kind of person, he is known for his innocence in the locality, It was rainy season so everyone in the house were busy. The crop has got much weed. There are many stories and instance on his innocence. They need a wooden plough to weed out. Gotha requested his father to take huge wooden log to Erabhadrachari to make the equipment. Khimaji forgot its name "what Khimji why did you come? What happened to Gotha?" He was clearing the upper layer of wood.

"He is busy with other work in the field Eabhadranna, that is why he sent me". The carpenter embarrassed to ask questions to him. "What do you want with this log? Asked, saw his face. "I do not know brother, but, a thing which go straight in the line of the crop and comes back straight". He

glanced his face to understand his reaction. Erabhadrachari was annoyed with that reply. He just guesses out of the size of the wooden log and prepares a plough like equipment for weeding out. Villagers of his surrounding considered him as a 'God like man'. no one has any experience that Khimaji has hurt them. But Gujari is just opposite to it. If she pickes up any quarrel, she will never leave any one so easily. Her daughter, Jugali, inherited all her mother's qualities. At least fifty times, she quarreled with her husband and returned to her mother's house within three years. Her husband Jangu fed up with her behaviour. He complained to the village elders but he is also afraid of Gujaris' loud mouth and so kept quiet.

Years have passed, Jugali's younger brother got issues who had married late, but she did not get any. It became the psychological and emotional problem caused by their quarrel. Jugali's husband Jangu calls her. "you unfertile barren land, you can not bear a child in your womb. Not even a germ" directly tells. "You impotent fellow, you don't have right to call me like that, it is not my fault. A fault is with you, mind it unmanly eunuch" She gave back to him. "Is it? Wait, I will show you whether the fault is with me are with you" he was waiting for an opportunity to prove allegation on him by his wife and other villagers. It was a good occasion to prove him that he is not impotent. A married woman ran away with two of her children from the far off village. Jangunaik brought her to his home without his wife Jugali's permission. Jugali did not tolerate this.

"I will see how she enters my house, dirty swine. Don't I know whom she has wombed those two children. This pimp brought her as he is the father of those bastards. What he will do with the cultivated land?". She became ferocious. Janganaik succeeded to get her nod at last.

"But you can keep her out of my house, then only I will keep quite otherwise I won't tolerate this injustice". Said unwillingly.

Relationship of Gothanaik and his mother was becoming sore. "How long can I help you? let my younger son and his

children grow freely" she boldly announced. Gotha did not understand the inner meaning of her words. "what do you mean mother?" he glanced her face. "Gotha you are not a small kid to explain everything. Your wife is not obeying my words, she acts like a queen." She added oil to the burning fire. "Is it true mother, I will kill her the whore" He told with closed fist and moved outside. "Now it is too late, you could have controlled her long ago, the water has crossed its level". She neglected him. Gotha realized her intention. "why are you beating around the bush mother, tell me openly, you do not want my family, you want me to go out. I was fool, did not realise this fact earlier. I worked like donkey, made everything. All right, Those who are helpless are helped by the God." Caught his wife's hand and took all his children and went outside without taking anything from the house.

**III**

Really it was difficult to start a new life for Gothanaik. He built a small hut just adjacent to his old house. All Ten children are small. Without vessels to prepare food, they came out. Ponni's aunt Dhondi gave her a old earthern pot to prepare Ragi malt, that is all, Gotha is helpless, he worried about his small children."Oh! God, what can I do?" he cried, "Why did you give me ten children? I can't feed them. Ten hungry stomachs awaiting me in my hut. If I go without any thing... I cannot imagine". Eyes are wet and heart is numb. He started running north, south, east, west, again came to the same spot. He did not find any solution. He decided to end his life. He tried to hang himself to the tree with his dhoti. He removed his dhoti and tied to the tree and brought big stone to stand and put his head into the knot of dhoti.

He bowed his head down, Kittanna Bhat, started moving here and there. "Are you gone mad? why have you forgot that you have ten dependents? That man saw you were trying to hang, rescued, otherwise?" He did not speak. "My mind was off for a moment, the hungry faces of my children and wife came in front of me, I..." Gothanaik became emotional. "You could have imagined once, I am still alive,

haven't you thought of me?" Kittanna was angry. "I was not able to think, Sir", Gotha moaned. "All right you do one thing, you have to show your mother that you can live independent. All my land under the tank, I give you. In my cowshed a pair of tender oxen are there; take them and tame them, by next year they will be the big bulls. Take whatever grain you want". He encouraged him. Gotha relaxed, he followed Kittanna to Dundatoor.

Gotha's elder son, Tukka, is younger to his sister Sonali, After Tukka, Chelva, Sanni, Shenku, Pamadi, Dhawala, Kumari and last son is Jagga. All the ten are very small. Because of scholarly and learned Kittanna, Gotha was sending all his children to school. Eldest son Tukka was not doing well in the school. Hence, he decided to stop him sending to school. He asked him to take a pair of bullocks to field to graze. He grew along with the bullocks. After two years of grazing them in field, Gothanaik took them into the empty pond and put yoke on their necks to tame for agricultural work. The young ones, never new to follow the line, short tempered. Gotha had beaten them into black and blue. In a forte-night, both son and father tamed them. At last, they accepted their command. Tukka started going along with his bullock to cultivate the land. Early morning, at five O clock, he wakes up and eats left overs in the night with fresh curd, before sun becomes hot, he returns to the house. He pours some water on the back of the bullocks and cleans them. After lunch, he drives them to field for grazing.

Gotha was worried about his first daughter who is eldest of all and has attained marriageable age. Kakapura people started talking about the girl. Though she is matured, not married, still sitting at home. Ponnibai sent message to many for matrimony; at last a bride groom came from Panjanatti. A tall lean boy, moustache was just growing. He lost his father. Two sisters and mother were present in his family. He has five acres of dry land, his economic condition is not good but his character is good. Gujari was not happy with the boy. "His nicker is slipping down, it is unable stand on

his trunk, can he rule the girl? Gotha, see other boys". Condemned him but Ponnibai was impressed by the boy, "now he is small, gradually he may get good physic, when your son got married, how was he? We always talk of others. We never mind what is our position is". She tried to hit back her old mother-in-law. With that argument, betel leaves and nuts exchanging ceremony was over. After a fortnight, marriage was fixed. Gotha orders his elder son to load a cart full of ration to his wood be son-in-law's house. He gave everything; supplied, Jowar, Jaggery, spice etc.

Gotha waived off all the expenses; even the expected bridegroom's is paying bride tax and many other traditional expenses. Peeku, Gotha's son-in-law, felt ashamed. He decided to pay back all the debts, when he becomes rich. His mother and sister were very happy with marriage; they felt secured because of seven male children of Gothanaik. Since their village Panjanatti is near to Kakapura, they can rescue their only son Peeku if someone tries to bully him. A new channel was being digged near the village, After few years of Peeku's marriage, Government planned to supply water for agriculture. TungaBadra river water will be diverted from Lakavalli dam for irrigation to those dry areas. Panjanatti comes into the limitation of this provision. This was another reason for Gothanaik's decision to give his daughter to him.

Gothaniak's elder son, Tukka, did not do well in the school. He is a dull headed fellow; whatever the teacher says he does not follow. Shantveerappa his teacher advised Gotha to discontinue him and make use of his physical strength to agriculture. The third son, Pamadi was doing well in school. So he was continued. He passed and had been sent to Dundattoor. Later he had been sent to Harpanahalli public hostel. Pamadi was promoted to Xth class. But he failed in a few papers in tenth. His mother was very much worried about him. Pamadi is short tempered fellow; always picks up quarrels with people. She wanted him to stay in the city. If he comes to the village, he won't allow any one to live in peace, so she started sending money. She requested toddy

shop Ramka who was going Dundathoor every day to load toddy on his ass. She never forgets. He reminds her "Ramaka, becareful, he will be hungry, if you forget to give it". As a humble man, he promised her, "No, sister I know that he will be waiting in Dundathoor". She was happy with that. Pamadi was going for tuition, Taranbhata, a graduate of Dundatoor was teaching him Science and Mathametics. But he did not pass. Desparated Pamadi went to Bellary to do his Industrial Training. Gothanaik was fed up with his failure. He decided not to send money to him but his mother, continued to send money keeping under the hundred dried rotti. Two years he stayed in Bellary with a policeman who supposed to belong to the Banjara community, because of this affinity, he allowed him to stay in his room. Pamadi completed his two years training and returned to the village. Pamadi is very enthusiastic to work in the field. When he returned, he encouraged all his brothers to work hard in the land which they are cultivating for 50% share. He tills land in the summer with plough yoked to four bullocks. The field was absorbed good rain because of the mud loosened by the plough. He planned to extract manoevours from the heap of dung. In the Monsoon's early showering, he asked his father to sow hybrid Jawar seeds and sepels emerged; he involved all the members of the family to do the *Jawar work* in the field. The joint family had thirty members. The eldest son of Gotha niak who got married has four children also included in the family list; Pamadi made all the four children to work along with their mother Namibai who is lazy and escaped every time from the work.

There were a good rains and the hard work of the family got good yield of Hybrid Jawar. In the month of October, they started cutting jawar. Pamadi brought some extra labourers from the village. Saku a poor labour, did not help himself expressing his urge. "Brother-Pamadi, this year is the luckiest year in the history of your family. Because of your hard work, it could be possible to grow at least 100 bags of Jawar". Bathi, a lady who is against to Gotha naik's family,

said, "no, I do not think it will be 100 Quintals, no one in the village till now has crossed fifty Quintals; it is a record that my uncle Kanunaik has grown 70 Quintals of Jawar some five years ago". Narrated the history. Pamadi, did not tolerate this. He tried to cut down her silly calculation. "Oh! Common Bathi, why are you so much tensed regarding the small thing. Whether 100 quintal or 50 as mother earth pleases that much we will be getting. Shut your mouth and continue the work". But he was hurt. He was really worried about villagers who are against the family.

When Gothanaik's family is busy with harvesting; his brother Peeku started opposing him. Because he married two women, first wife Poni gives birth to fourteen females. His mother Gujari was worried on the words of the Dundatur Brahmin once said, "What Gujari your younger son doesn't have male issue, after his death, his soul will not go to the heaven, you know Gujari, in Hindulaw, it is clearly mentioned that "Na putra Gatirnasti", is same what I mean". Though he is too younger to her, because of the hierarchy he used singular when he addressed her. "I don't understand sir, what you meant, I am not learned like you", I will take it serious", she decided in heart and mind to do something. Before she decided, Peeku had decided to adopt his elder brother Gotha's son Dhawala who stands sixth in the row. He is hard working and strengthfull. But Gothanaik and his wife Ponnibai were not ready to give him in adoption to his uncle. They were willing to give the fifth boy to be adopted. Peeku was not ready to accept their proposal. His mother Gujari advised him "My child, why do you want to adopt others children?. You are not old enough to think so, you marry another girl, and have your own male child", she strictly denied the adoption.

After a month of his second marriage, Gujaribai died. Peekunaik's elder wife stolen all her silver coins and handi works. Whatever the old woman possesed must be divided between both the children but the old lady Gujari did not reveal the fact. Hence Pani only hides precious items

belonged to her. Exactly a month latter, Pani had some problem. She started talking like Gujari, even she coughed like her, she called her husband as Peeku and his brother, as Gotha. "Ye ! idiots can't you see, your mother has come. Give me dry bread at least and chicken curry with a bottle of toddy I will drink and eat my bread today. I will eat it comfortably. When I was alive, you never gave comfort, many problems I have faced. You know the trauma I have undergone". Gotha and Peeku worried about this behaviour of Panibai. "Are you all right. Pani, ye Pani, you donkey not responding to my words. Wait I will teach you a lesson", goes inside and brought a bamboo stick and started thrashing her. "Ye, Peeku, you are beating me, beating your mother, what do you think of yourselves, idiot, I am your mother, just sense this, you can feel me". Peeku stopped thrashing his wife Pani. He turned his face to see his brother's reactions, Gothanaik worried about apparition of his mother's spirit in his brother's wife. He did not understand what to do with this. Entire village starts speaking about this spirit of Gujari. Why that old lady caught Pani only, they suspected Pani's evil deeds and her cheating to her family members who are the genuine share holders of the property. Which she left. But, one hundred silver coins, the marriage, traditional dress of her community, a old bag *kotli kotlo, canchi* made up of handy-work, which she possesses from her mother-in-law were stolen by Pani. Villagers realized why she was haunted.

After some days, Gujari's wandering spirit left Pani. Her husband Peeku was relaxed. But Basya-a villager belongs to the same village Kakapur. Once he went to graze his bullocks and took a nap under the mango tree where Gujari's body was cremated; started unusual kind of behaviour. "Ye, give me my money you have taken loan from me I won't leave you" started running towards the mango tree. The village head, Hattinaik, Kota were much worried about the haunted spirit of Gujari. He called the executives of the village, Kannu, Bhima, Lakkiya. "If we leave like this, it will disturb

the entire village what should be done?" Kota put question before them. "why can't we invite the family members and ask their advise"? Bhima suggested. "Don't behave like a child Bhima, it is very sensitive issue. We cannot involve the family members here, because it hurts their feelings, how can one digest the fact that his mother has became a devil". Kota, clear the doubt. "You are right Kotanaik, because they believed that, after death their mother has became a god but immediately if we say these words, they may be hurt badly" Kanu and Lakiya added their opinion. At last, they decided to bring a priest to controle the devilish behaviour of Gujari. When she was alive, she was bold enough, she argued with many people, quarrelsome lady, I think she continued even after her death also, Kota thought inside.

It was Monday morning. The priest who came from eastern side started his effort through all magical power to controle that lady. First question he asked was "Who are you?" she replied in a distorted voice, "First tell me who are you?"

"can't you know who I am? Wait I will show you who I am?" He started beating him. Gujari started crying. "Oh, no, no....

"ye ! stop beating me" said nervously". Then ...."

"Then tell your name and give your proof". Priest gave a pause. "come on....". she replied "I am Gujari, take my, proof,"

Basya plucked a handful of hair from his head and gave them to the priest. "you stupid devil, why do you come?" again he asked but did not reply. He took the bamboo stick and started thrashing. She did not open her mouth, "tell, tell," Basya's wife Basvi, fainted, and uttered in low voice, "priest, kindly don't beat my husband to black and blue, he will die". Her voice was fadingout. People who gathered there cried loudly. "Oh she goes unconscious, come on! leave the space, some blow the air with your towel, bring some water". She was taken away. Gujari, started speaking. "Ye!

priest what right do you have to ask me that question?. I came here to see my silver coins, they are with Peeku's wife Pani, unless she gives I won't go". Priest was annoyed. "why can't you go to her, why this poor man has to suffer. Come on, leave his body and go." He commands her." Ye, stupid, I wanted to take her, why this fellow had to come, when I was awaken. So, I went to him. She escaped from my hands, otherwise I would have crushed her to the ground". Basya was literally hissing. People clicked their tongues and started repenting on Basya's position. The priest lost his control and started beating him. "come on leave him leave him, tell, are you leaving him or not?".... he continued. "No.... no.... no, don't beat me, I am going I am going....." Basya's voice became low, till lower and stopped. The priest laughed loudly. People smiled and dispersed. Basvi woke up and took her husband to the house. She opened her mouth to scold the spirit of Gujari, but immediately remembered her children, stopped the words at her throat and goes to her house, thinking of Gujari's most quarrelsome daughter Jugali. Jugali has all characteristics of her mother Gujari. After her marriage she did not get any issues. But she is very greedy. Some years ago in a rabi season, after the harvest stubble of Jawar sprouted in the field of Jugali, Ramaka of neighbouring village every evening when people go to their houses, leaves his bullocks to eat the stubble. Jugali detected mischief and decided to catch the culprit red handed. That evening Ramaka did the same thing. She hide behind the bush and caught him "Leave my collar you Lamani, how dare you to hold a collar of a male" he gave a blow on her face. Jugali started screaming, none was there to hear, but all of a sudden labours of Kakapura rushed to the spot after hearing a female voice. "You son of swine beating me, touched a woman" a big crowd was gathered, she started hissing with anger. "I will not leave you 'what ever happens I will kill you? I won't bother, I won't leave" Ramka's face turned pale, "Jugali, leave my collar, calmly I am warning you leave it". He tried to hide his fear and showing his male power. Jugali, saw the crowd and spit on his face; without

a word she left his collar and walked off. The crowd burst into laugh. Ramaka bowed his head in shame. He cleaned his face with towel and ran to his village. Nobody dared to stand in front of Jugali. Basavi, wiped her sweat and walked off.

The walls of Gothanaik were expanded. All his children now have grown up and responsible. He married off two daughters. The family members were working hard to feed their family. A group of people are not tolerating Gotha's progress, waiting for an opportunity to demoralize him and pull his leg down. Immediately they targeted his brother Peeku. They took him to toddy shop. They purchased bottles of toddy and offered him. Poor fellow did not understand the plot. "what Peeku, your brother is becoming rich and you are heading towards poverty" Krishna left some worms in his brain. Bhasya, added, "you know from where he got money?" Peeku saw his face, the third one took this opportunity, "you know he has cheated you, all money he had stolen from your mother. Now he is enjoying". Peeku empty the bottle. All the three brain-washed him and went to their homes. Peeku was out of control, he started scolding his brother from the last street, "Brother! where is brother? Who is brother? He is a rogue, criminal. Cheated me, my innocent mother. Do you know how he became rich? You know? It is my share he is enjoying with his ten children. He is elder know, my mother gave liberty to handle cash. This fellow never gave account." He was loudly announcing it in front of the Thande Durgamma's temple. His elder wife Pani heard this "come on, do not talk rubbish, if your brother or his children listen, break your bones". Caught his hand and tried to drag him to home. "who? my brother, don't threartan me. I know what he is, ye, Gotha, you robber! you robbed my house, aren't ashamed?" Peeku lost his control and fell down inside the drainage. Gotha controlled for the sake of his mother and father. But Peeku crossed all the boundaries. Pamadi, quietly listening his uncle's comments on his father, pulled a long stick and came out, "what do

you think about yourself, my father cheated your mother and you, did not you listen that day your mother's spirit disclosed the truth you and your elder wife, robbed your own mother". "you puppy, calling me thief, I will not spare you". Stood and slapped on his cheek.

"You old donkey, hitting me", started beating his uncle and aunt. Peekunaik and Pani loudly shouted, "help.... someone help us. They are going to kill my husband, brother, separate them." Pani requested every one. Peeku's body was lying in the street. Gotha was not knowing this episode, he came late from the land. Pamdi narrated everything to him. "why did you beat him? let him go to the hell, nonsense fellow, calls me thief, whole world knows who is who, I need not give any clarification to anybody". He tolerated everything.

Peeku's daughters came to rescue their father, they took him home and treated him with hot salt. Now he is conscious; toddy which he consumed has vanished," mother, See! how he had beaten rascal, what a force he has". Repenting, Peeku's younger wife Jatki took a lantern and went along with her daughter to meet the so called leader of the village Makhnunaik. He was enjoying his night with Tom, Dick, Harry. The rascals of his street. "sir... are you in the home?" Jatki called him. When he heard a female voice, he stopped his useless jokes. "what? there is a female voice. who is there?", he called.

"It is me Jatki, Peeku's second wife" Makhnu was pleased with that melodious voice. He came out suddenly. "what is the matter? You are here at this time of the night". He tried to touch her hand. "My husband is very badly beaten up by my nephew. His condition is critical. He sent me to take you to him", she explained everything. "They have crossed all the limit's, I do not know what to do with them" he concentrated on her boobs. She knew that and kept quite. Makhanu lost his control. "you move ahead, I will follow you, I will see that he will be punished, bastard, thinks that he is hero of the village. Who will care for his

education in the city?" He tried to show his guts in front of Jatki, young lady of Peeku. Some how he wanted to impress and have sex with her. He called Goma and Chinu. "see, I will brainwash Peeku to go against Gotha, and charge a complaint in police station at Dundatoor. You have to take Peeku and his elder wife Pani to the station", unexpressable thoughts were peeping in his mind. Goma understood his evil intention, "Jatki's story will complete today" said in whisper. Chinu "Sir, we are here to obey your order".

When they reached Peeku's house, all twenty four girls were screaming and crying. Some of them were scolding their uncle Gotha and his son Pamadi. When he entered, there was silence.

"Brother, Peeku, why are you worring so much. Do you think I am dead on your part? I am still alive to help you. You have to do what I am going to tell you. I have already briefed everything to Chinu and Goma. Take these ten rupees and finish the work first, rest of the things leave it to me" glanced towards Jatki. He asked Goma to bring his bullock cart to carry them. He did not forget to caution him. "Go slow and come slow. It is dark I will be here". His code language Goma and Peeku understood *Chinu*. Peeku opened his mouth and requested Makhanu. "Please take care of the house, the rascals may damage anything". He moaned mother. "I will take care. Don't worry" by looking at Jatki promised him.

It was 12'o clock midnight, Makhanu entered the premises of Peeku. He knocked the door of Peeku's second hut, where Jatki was sleeping. She was afraid of the sound and slowly asked, "Who is there?" Makhanu, whispered, " I am' Makhanu. Can you open the door"?. He has some hesitation. "Oh! It is you, I was waiting for you". Come in, she opened the door. He was holding a toddy bottle. "Come on! drink it" he gave the bottle to her. She received with smile and drank in a single breath. He never gave up a chance to hold her tightly, "You are so beautiful; I know that Peeku is not satisfying you. Before your marriage, I was keeping an eye

on you." He uttered at her ears. She took him on her body and they forgot the whole world. They slept together till the first cock's crow. He heard the bell's sound of his bullocks. He immediately got up, opened the door and slipped off.

The case was continued. Gotha's all children were involved in the case, Peeku' s all girls and two wives were also dragged into the case. The lawyer asked them to compromise and withdraw the case but Makhanu is not interested in this. Gothanaik and his children attended the court, till they cleaned their land to sow the seeds. But they are not satisfied with this treatment of the land. Peeku's land was not ready to sow the seeds. He was alone to do all the work. This rainy season he wanted to leave the land empty. Gotha and his family members half day attend the court and rush to work in the field. Whenever they found time, they went to earn some money. In order to meet the court expenses, Peeku sold an acre of land to the landlord of Masloor.

After eight years in vain efforts to punish either party, they compromised. Makhanu enjoyed this long period. But Gothanaik incurred much loss. When the first case was settled the second was started. Bullocks broker Gudaga's five children purposefully attacked Gotahnaik, near the village well. The issue started from the mangoes fall down in the first monsoon's whirlewind. Due to the wind, many mangoes fell down on the ground, half ripen mangoes were good to eat, Pamadi and his friend toddy shop Shambu's son Jingalu go after the whrilewind, and collected a ghannybag full of half ripe mangoes from broker Gudaga's mango trees and his uncle Peeku. Gudaga's son Dangu rushed to collect the mangoes supposed to fall down in the whirl wind. He saw from the distance that two people collecting mangoes under his tree. He shouted, "Ye you sons of bitch, stealing mangoes from our trees? Wait I will teach you a lesson". He ran to catch them. Pamadi and Jingalu were not afraid. They gather mangoes as if they were collecting from their own tree. Dangu becomes furious when he saw Pamadi. "Bastard,

do you think, This is your fathers tree? fearlessly collecting mangoes" took a stone and threw towards Pamadi. The stone hit Pamadi's elbow. Pained Pamadi cried "Mother, I am dead". "Son of the whore killed my friend". Took a big stone and rushed to hit him, Pamadi recovered from the pain and stopped Jingalu. He went aside to bring a long stick. He thrashed Dangu into black and blue. Then they left him to cry and escaped with the mangoes bag. Dangu went unconscious a while, gathered courage to hit them back. But both had escaped. He goes to his house and complains against Pamadi and Jingalu. His drunkard father oxbroker Gudaga without enquiring further, straight away went to Gothanaik's house, badly scolded Pamadi. Gotha tried to convince him. Over loaded Gudaga did not listen. Pamadi brought a log of wood and started beating. Gudaga's four elder children rushed to rescue their father. Immediately the ground of the village well became the battle field. Gothanaik's children made them to leave the ground hide inside their house. The elder son of Gudaga who runs a petty shop, Andani, was caught in the hands of Gothanaik's children. After beating Pamadi took a big stone to crush his head. Andani's wife came to rescue. She requested them in a humble tone." Brother, kindly protect my husband and avoid my widowhood. I beg you. Leave him please, leave him". She was holding his leg. Pamadi grinned; Gotha came and took away the stone. "Come, get up and run, tell your brothers not to put the hands in lion's mouth". He drives away everyone, pushed all his children into the house. "Because of your careless behaviour, we are facing lots of problems Pamadi, you won't deserve to stay in the village. You must take up a job and settle in city". Gothanaik expressed his views. There was a silence in the tensed home.

It was December and villagers were busy in loading ragi grass from the field. Gothanaik completed his work earlier to start cutting sugarcane to make Jaggery. All his bullocks loaded to yoke to turn round to crush a bundle of sugarcane. The juice collected in a big ditch, later it is poured into a big

metal vase and boils it adding limestone powder. When the juice was boiled until it converts into jaggery, then it was poured in molding boxes to give shape. Gothanaik and his sons are busy in cutting sugarcane from Kittannabhatta's field. They had already extracted some jaggery, again one is boiling on the stove. Gothanaik is very keen and careful in testing jaggery, in case something goes wrong the whole thing will be wasted. Hence, he is keen in this work. It was afternoon, when the former panchayath Chairman Budda Hanuma of Sambur came to meet Gotha. The chairman knows that Gotha is the honest and well known in the village of Kakapura. Makhanu's character is known to everyone; he is a rouge, number one thief, he cheated many people in the village. He looted many, whoever comes to the village, he goes first and tries to trap them. His nature is obviously bad. He had collected lot of money from the candidate of election to distribute the money among the villagers but never gave single paisa to them. He has given some toddy bottle to his followers like Kishna, Rupya, Chendu, Chamu, the rest of money he keeps for himself. Hattinaika, Kenchajja Peerusab, Gaduga and other leaders of the village were not happy with him. Though Hattinaika and Kota belong to the same clan, he plays double game but Kenchajja and Peerusab always appreciate Gotha's commitment and dedication. All the five village people know this. Hence, BuddaHanuma wanted to encash his popularity. He wanted to retain his village panchayath chairmanship, for that he was searching a winning horse. If Gothanaik joins him, certainly everything will be possible. The five years in his tenure he did nothing, so he was worried. Immediately he realized that Gothanaik will be his trump card, through him he can win and be the chairman for another five years. Gothanaik was busy in sugarcane crushing, and preparation of Jaggery, when he saw BuddaHanuma the ex-Chairman, standing at his *Alemane*, he was surprised and came out of the camp." What is the matter Sir? is anything wrong? what made you to come to me"? he widened his eyes and asked in a single breath." No,

Gotha, nothing, Simply I have come to you. As I was passing through this way, just I wanted to enquire your progress and health that is all, no other matter is there". He tried to hide the original motto of his visit. Gothanaik did not realize the intention. He offered sugarcane juice in an earthen pot. Budda now begins, "I am sorry, I forgot to tell my intention to visit you." He glanced his face. Gothanaik failed to assume what is going on in the mind of Budda. So he blankly glanced him. "You know Gotha, with all our personal work, we have to do something for our village". He was beating round the bush. Gotha opened his mouth "Yes master, you are doing really good work. I am sure that you will win again in coming election. People like you. You must continue in this field" uttered innocently. "No no, Gotha, the days have changed. There is no value for Gandhiji's politics, it has changed. If you offer toddy or arrack, they will vote you. People like Makhanu are polluting the politics. You know he is eager to join my party. He had sent many people to recommend his name. But my intention is a right person should join my party". He laid a trap. "Yes, master you are absolutely right, certainly I will be with you whole heartedly". One step he moved forward. The chairman was waiting for this. He realized that it is right time to hit the iron. "But the thing is", he expressed helplessness. "What is the matter master? You are looking worried". Gothanaik exclaimed his views. "Yes! Gotha, in twenty five years of my political career, I never experienced any problem, this election is becoming a challenge for me. I want a clean handed person like you in my party, then it will be easy to win the election. What do you say?" He was waiting for his reply. "Politics and me, No sir, it is not possible". He disapproved. People who came along with chairman forced Gothanaik to accept the offer; otherwise the power will go into wrong person's hands. Gothanaik was in dilemma "Don't worry, I will look after everything. You just file your nomination". Chairman gave an assurance. Gothanaik called his elder son Tukka, "See, I will return in the evening. After

this boiling big bowl, if you empty this and fill it again boil at right point", He walked with ex-chairman.

Except few houses, which belong to Makhanu, the entire village accepted Gothanaik. Makhanu got irritated, when he heard the name of Gotha. "What? Is that baseless Gotha contesting for election? I won't leave him to rule this village." Immediately he called all his clan people and enemies of Gotha. Next day morning, ten bullock carts are ready to go to Dundatoor, from there they will take government bus or a lorry to reach Harpur. At first cock's crow, Gotha woke up and arranged twenty bullock carts to carry his followers. Chairman Budda Hanuman's followers from Sadanahalli came in forty bullock carts and his other two followers from Tamberi and Yallur also joined them at Dundatoor. Makhanu and his people tried to avoid them and climbed the high body of lorry to reach Harpur. Both the parties filed their nominations in front of Taluk election commissioner. "See how he is behaving". Makhanu commented on Gothanaik. He was eagerly waiting to defeat Gotha and teach him a lesson. "He is a an outsider, came few years back and acting like a permanent settler. Did his father build this village,? he is an alien. I have to show him my strength, yes", uttered himself. The chairman took his followers to a nearby arrack shop and ordered them as many bottles as they wished to drink. After that he took them to an old military hotel for non-vegetarian food. Over alcohol, people started praising the chairman and Gothanaik for wonderful party. "A Penniless fellow, Makhanu was trying to fight against the wind. You know brother, no one feel pain except himself, where is the chairman and Gotha and where is he?" White stone powder seller Chikkanaik mumbled unconsciously. Makhanu's followers drink half tea in a small hotel and repenting themselves for being with him and travelled back to Kakapura. Election fever was raised. Makhanu's agenda was Gothanaik was an outsider. He doesn't belong to the village and some other baseless issues. But Gothanaik has many strong reasons to condemn Makhanu. "Friends you all know, what is he? When we auctioned the

god's bull and cow, we handed over money to our village teacher Dhane master who is a puppet of Makhanu. What happened to that money? In last year election, parties have given almost eight hundred rupees to distribute bottles of toddy among the villagers. What happened? The money collected from punishment, bride tax, where is it? There is no account. Tell me, do you need such great leader?" Gotha became emotional while appealing for the votes. He was talking like a seasoned politician. Many agreed with him. Some of Makhanu's followers tried to argue and disturb his canvas. The majority were supporting Gotha. Hence, the disturbance was snubbed by them. Family members of Gothaniak were struggling hard to win the election. That was the great opportunity to all the poor to get fulfilled their wishes; there is obligation on the part of both the parties. Makhanu and his followers asked people to go to Gothanaik. It was misutilized by Gothas labour Mangamma. She came and asked Gothanaik to spare his cart to fetch her sister from Dundatoor. Goth stunned, she is crazy asking his son to provide bullock and cart. Before election, she never came in front of Gothanaik. Now boldly asking a cart. Another woman also asked: "Brother, my sister is waiting in Dundatoor, can you spare me your cart and bullock to bring her". Without any hesitation, she demanded. Gotha was annoyed by these words. Stupid, she never talked with me face to face because of election she too became a tiger. Without a word, he asked his son Sanu to give her cart and bullock. Sanu obeyed his father's words. Gothanaik goes for election campaign from street to street and house to house. Many educated people promised to encourage him. Some people are playing double game. They are drinking 'arrack' from Gotha and Makhanu and promised to vote both of them. Some people openly rejected Gothanaik because of his prosperity in the village and his popularity, whereas some admired his courage and encouraged him. The votes are divided according to the caste and clan as well as the strength of population of the village. Though it is a Banjara thanda, non-Banjara's are also residing in the village.

Most of the non banjaras including Muslims are in favour of Gothanaik. Because Gotha is a humble, down to earth, practical person. He always mixes with everyone, never quarrels with anyone unnecessarily. If someone tries to attack him, he never leaves them. Moreover, he does not have time to involve in such things because he involved in his own agricultural activities. Unnecessarily he never back bites anyone in the village. So, he was liked by everyone. Even in Panchayat, he takes the side of truth. He never encourages illegal activities in thanda. Obviously he was the darling of everyone. Makhanu's followers are his own clan people. They were in unity. Moreover, Gotha and his children gradually grounding their roots in the village which was unbearable. Gaduga who was the prime enemy of Gothanaik, who is a broker of the cattle in cattle market, who helps the people to purchase bullocks always stays in the Dundatoor city which is hardly twelve kilometers from the village. His cousin who is looking after the land is also looking after his wife. They are the enemies of Gothanaik. Whenever they meet each other, they behave like snake and mangoose. He encourages Makhanu who openly once invited his wife for sex in the field. In the upper street, some are the relatives of Makhanu, rest of them were ready to help Gotha. In the back street, all poor labourers who work in Gothanaik's field know him, so, they are happy to cast their vote to him. But Makhanu tried to brain wash. He plucked neem leaves from Goddess Guddama's to pledge them. It became a big headache to them. Secretly they convinced Gotha, "See, master we give our votes to you, but we never come openly either for canvas or in campaign, you know the situation. We are hand - to - mouth people. We do not have strength to boldly face Makhanu". They expressed their helplessness. The ex-chairman convinced all his caste people to vote Gotha. Everyone was trying to take the privilege of the election. The village cowherd Rangajja purposefully left his buffalos in Gotha's fodder stock. When his younger son Kumari politely requested him to drive away his buffalo, he said "What, do you think? Am I a joker, am I a bafoon,

without my knowledge they have gone inside a while ago, I know what to do. Don't advice me, go and complain your father Gotha, what will he do? Come on tell us. We are the native people of this village. You know, my grandfather had but hundreds of acres of land somehow he lost everything. Otherwise we would have ruled this village. Your family came just twenty or thirty years ago, you don't have right to rule us". Kumari prompted as it is his father. "Ok, my son tolerate now, this is election moment, we cannot say anything to anyone. You know intentionally they are persuading us to quarrel and we get defeated in the election. This is all our opponents trick. We must control, there will be our time; then we will play till they keep quiet?" Calmly advised all his children.

The day before election, it was a dark night. Whole night both parties were awake. Gotha was watching them at the upper street, Panibai and her younger children were watching lower street, rest of the people walked up and down. No one closed their eyelids till morning. The bright star seen in east Gothanaik took bath in cold water. He wore a neat and clean cloth, brought a coconut, camphor, agarbathi and match box to offer to polling box. He applied turmeric, white strips and vermeil to the box and broke the coconut and distributed copra to all polling officers. He prayed for smooth and peaceful polling. It was followed by Makhanu. At 8 O' clock, the first vote was cast. Nobody knows who got the highest votes. At 5 PM, the box was sealed and taken to Harpuru. The village was in tension. Makhanu's followers started threatening everyone in the village." In case, Makhanu might have defeated, we don't know what he will do" Kishna told in front of poor people. Gotha's opponents calculated the post polling scenario. They started celebration for their victory. Every day they go to Dyamaga's toddy shop, " Ye, Dyamga, you want to stay here or not? You know Makhanu is going to win in the election then we are the leaders, keep credit in your shop we will pay later". Dymaga, who belongs to Dundatoor gave them water mixed

toddy. If he says no, they are going to create a big scene. He tolerated them for a week.

The ex-chairman arranged hundred carts to carry his people to Dundatoor. Makhanu had a tough time. He called his wife Somli, "Today, there is a result." She saw his face." I am telling it to you" he raised his voice. "What can I do? I am working in others fields to feed you and your children. Again you extend your hand in front of me to fulfill your hobbies, drink, smoke, and gamble." There was a silence. "Don't talk much. Imagine that our bad days are gone. I will be the member of Panchayat, then no need to go to others fields to work. Now give hundred". He saw her. "What, hundred rupees!" can you show me how it looks like dear! We are the people of one-two rupees, don't dream all these things" she said the reality. "Come on, don't cook the tale, give how much you saved that is all" He completes the argument. She was hiding twenty rupees to family expences, she gave the same to him and left the house for work. Makhanu was worried about the money. He remembered the school teacher, who is a close friend of him. He only recommended his name to keep village money with him. Dhanu master, started giving loan from the same money given to him and collected much interest upon that. This secret is known to Makhanu. Now he wanted to take this opportunity. Before Dhanu goes to his routine work, he caught him. Dhanu felt irritated. "What is the matter so early" he wakes up from his bed. "Yes teacher. I have some work with you". Straight way he told. Stingy Dhanu sensed his arrival is intentional. But he cannot avoid him. He started imagining what to tell him when he asks money." Dhanu master, you know the fact. I am not going to tell you lie. Today there will be counting. We have to go" he gave a pause. "Is it, then go first". He gave an intelligent answer. "It is easy to tell sir, but I don't have money to go, please give me two hundred rupees. I will return after a month". He was waiting for his reply. "Money, you know Makhanu, I am not getting my government salary regularly; once in three months we are getting and two-three children are

studying in city. I have to look after their expenses at present. I do not have money". He tried to escape. "What, you don't have money? I know Dhanu master, don't forget the moment, which I recommend your name to keep all village money almost ten thousand rupees. Even I know what are you doing with that money. Shut your mouth and do as I say". He targets all his evil deeds. Dhanu master realized that he is in danger, he wanted to send him out immediately. He asked his wife to give fifty rupees. "Fifty, what teacher, I am not begging in front of you. I am asking a loan; give me as much as I asked." He grinned. "Come on give one hundred, he is like leach once caught someone it won't leave so easily."He told his wife. Makhanu started running from the spot. Hurrily they caught a truck, travelled to Harpuru, thousands of people were gathered already. Everyone is eager to know the candidate whom they have supported must win. Gotha, Chairman and their nominated counting agents were already present. Makhanu, Kishna, and others gathered around the ballot box. Counting started at 12.30 pm. First round started with Gotha's leading. In second round both of them were equal. Makhanu smiled, Kishna felt relaxed. But the third round was unbearable. Gotha got big marginal difference. Fourth and fifth Gotha was leading on. It was 6 o'clock evening, everything was over. Defeated Makhanu covered his face with his towel and slipped off from the place.

It was evening, a group of men and women were sitting at the out skirts of the village. "What happened, no one has returned from Harpur, I am eager to know the result of the election, Ye ! can you guess who will win? "Lame Haldu asked the group." "Who? it will be Gothaniak, don't imagine other option. He is a man of all qualities, kind enough towards the poor. His wife Pani never listens the word hungry. Whoever goes to her asking for floor or anything, she never says no, she is such a kind woman and they have to win" widow Dhani utter. Due to dark they cannot see who is walking on the road. Lame Haldu, recognized that someone

is approaching near them. He shouted, "Are you from Harpur? what is the news: The shadows move without a word."Ye you, can't you hear? I am talking to you don't pretend, answer!! demanded in his usual voice. "What, we are pretending. You bastard, son of a bitch, asking us to reply. I won't spare you, take take" Kishna started beating Lame Haldu. "Help, mother, I am dying, help me, anybody rescue me this bastred will kill otherwise". Nobody came to rescue him. The whole group joined to take revenge of their defeat in the election. Dhani, rushed to rescue Haldu. "Leave him, I tell you, leave, don't show your power on poor people and helpless. If you are really man, show in front of Gotha; do not war behind him" she started scolding in vulgur language. Kishna came to normal position. "Idiots, cheated us, ate our extract and voted him". The group walked out. "It means Gothanaik won in the election, "Ye, Dhani, he won I will disclose this in the village". He tries to run. But, merciless God does not give him strength to move fast. He started shouting and whistling: people gathered in a huge crowd to welcome their favourite hero Gotha who won the election. The crowd decided to go in procession on the streets of the village. Someone cried, "Where is the garland". No one heard his voice. Someone asked the crackers to break. Then there was a noise. At last Gothanaik reached the village. A bullock cart was arranged; the drummer and piper from Dundatoor reached in time to play in front of the procession. The crowd visited all temples in the village to offer prayers to the God. The crowd was mad, that was the victory of non-Banjara's and those who came late and settled in the Kakapura village. Kenchajja, Hasanubai, were over whelmed with joy". "Thank God, the power goes to the right man's hand" Hasanubai puffed a breath. Kenchajja sensed that the opponents will create some problem, to avoid unnecessary problem he cautioned Gothanaik to shut his mouth and ask his sons to keep silence in the procession. Chairman, Budda Hanuma sent a message to his people to maintain peace in the village. But Makhanu decided to pickup quarrel, when the procession comes in front of his house.

They kept ready, chilli powder, sticks and other weapons to beat them. Gothaniak's messenger Lasanu Naik brought a message and whispered in his ear. Kenchajja goes near and says, it is better to change the route, instead of Makhanu's house road we go infront of Hattinaika's house, we just break their plan, ask the crowd to move fast so that we can avoid the tension. Only today the temper will be there, tomorrow all will go to work and forget the things." Gotha agreed with Kenchajja. He called his son Pamadi who is extravagant and asked him to sit with him, so that half tension is avoided. The rest of tension will over within no time.

Five years have passed without anyone's notice. During next election, Gotha withdrew his candidature. Chairman sent a word but he did not agree," let others do get a chance", with these words he concentrated much on agriculture. The forest land encroached was not good to get yielding. As the family was increasing, scarcity of food, clothing, and accommodation increased. He requested his mentor Kittannabhatta to help him to purchase a land near his village. It was 15 acres all together. The land belongs to Dundatoor cycle shop owner Shamabhatta. After his death, his children Radhakrishna and Ghanshama decided to dispose the land and settle down in the city. When the rumour was spread, Gotha goes to them.

Radhakrishna and Ghansham know Gothanaik since their childhood days. Whenever Kittannabhatta goes to their shop to meet Shamabhatta he always spoke about Gotha. So the picture of Gotha is fixed in their mind. Their father too was very particular in selling his land to the one who really works in it. He passed the same opinion to his children. Hence, Radhakrishna and Ghansham decided that land should be sold to Gothanaik. He deserves to hold the land. Because he is not lazy, he works hard and cultivates land and looks after the land in good way. Both the children of Shambhatta promised to dispose land to Gothanaik.

The news spreads like a wild-fire. Many people in the village started visiting the cycle shop owner. "Is it true sir,

you are going to dispose of the land, if at all giving, kindly sell us". Radhakrishna and Ghansham fed up with this. Makhanu, Hattinaika, and Kishna, though they do not have money, and they are not really interested in purchasing the land, they wanted to create problem to Gotha and he has to give highest price. This bad intenion made them to visit Dundatoor twice or thrice in a day. Hattinaik requested washerman Shivanna to recommend on his behalf. Some important people in Dundatoor were also convincing Radhakrishna and Ghansham to sell the land to whom they want. But they are very particular and they never disobey the words of their father's friend Kittanna Bhat. Gothanaik knows this fact. He just kept quiet. Many spread the rumour that the 15 acres of Shamabhatt's land was sold to Hattinaik. Some told that they sold it to Dundatoor party only. The actual discussion took place in Dundatoor village temple. Radhakrishna and Ghansham announced the date, who ever participates and quotes the high price he will be given the land. There was no space to sit inside the temple. Pariari Manya, Whasherman Shiva, Kittannabhatta, Kota, Makhanu, Kishna and many others gathered inside the temple. After hustle and bustle, Radhakrishnabhatta announced that he is going to sell his land to the one who deserves, that is Gothanaik. It was his father's dream, it is not his own decision. Washerman Shiva angrily told, "Why are you doing partiality? There are other people who are ready to give the high price. You have to give the land to him who gives the highest price instead of sticking to a particular person". He still continued his speech. Ghansham stood and told. "Shiva, don't poke your nose in the personal matter. We did not invite you to participate here because we know what to do and whom to give the land," tried to shut his mouth. "You could have invited Gotha only why have you invited everyone here? Has he done any black magic on you or what? Pujari Nanja expressed his disapproval. Kittanna stood up and spoke. "It is not the matter, whom we sell the land; it has to be taken care that the land should be given to a right person. These are all not my words, these are

written in our religious books, so they are following the tradition that is all. There is no new thing in this". The crowd was silent. Gotha decided to register his land and keep the promise which he had given to his mother. He shared, whatever property he is going to purchase. Accordingly, he took 1/2 of the land and divided another half among his sister and brother. Hattinaik and Makhanu left Dundatoor blaming Kittanna who helped Gothanaik. Gotha has to arrange the money to register the property. After the selling process, he met Kittanna. "Master, tomorrow only we have to go to Harpur to register the property, if it is delayed then there will be problem". He told his anxiety " you are right, do you have money to do all the work? or you have any shortage" he asked Gotha. "I have some money with me, but I need two hundred for registration". He expressed his helplessness. "Two hundred, morning come to my house and take the amount and complete the work you have taken up in the hand". Kittanna went home. Purchasing 7 1/2 acres of land in Kakapura is not easy. He struggled a lot. His sister and brother had money. They came and joined him at the market place. Washerman Shiva purposely came there to threaten Gotha." Mere purchasing is not enough, that land must go to Hattinaik. That Kittanna and Gotha, deceived him" directly he commented. "It is not true Shiva, don't be in that assumption. To purchase a land we need fate also." He tried to convince. "Gotha don't try to close the issue I know everything", he provoked him."Ye, it is true what will you do, tell me, what will you do?' he gave back in same tone. "Don't shout, ok, I know what to do" he goes near him. "Shiva, you know, how many people you have in this village, the same number I have what will you do, come show me?" he came forward. Shiva thought that he can threaten and drive him out but Gotha is mentally strong. Washer man Shiva, who is known to all villages, is tall and hefty fellow, many were afraid with his voice only. Same strategy he tries to apply to Gothanaik. Gotha's younger brother Peeku started trembling. "Brother.....please keep quiet for God's sake. It is not our village." He tried to

convince. "Then what? I know this is not our village, would he kill me? Brother, if you are afraid of a frog, people will throw frogs on your body; if you stand firm, they leave you." He put some courage in him. Jugali, who is known for quarrel like her mother Gujari did not open her mouth. "Why are you arguing in vain? Nothing will happen" told her brother. Shiva moved backward and repeated, " come to the field, I will see how you cultivate that land" went without turn. "Go da, I know for threatening of vegena hay stock will not burn" said loudly. Shiva neglected his word and vanished, all the three decided to register their property on their names.

Gotha became real hero in the village. People started talking about his courage, and dedication; thirty years ago, he came and settled in this village, But he became land lord now. His ten children are almost grown up. Two daughters have been married, Tukka elder son married; he has three children at present. Pamadi after completion of his Industrial training, joined a company. After him, two are not ready to go to school. Pamadi wanted to send his younger brother Kumari to go to school. Kumari who is going to rear cattle in the field had been sent to the school. Though they have enough land due to heavy rain and uncontrollable weed, the yield is not good. The villagers did not know the use of fertilizers and in India manufacturing fertilizer was not started. The yield which Gothaniak was getting was not sufficient to run his family. He has to earn some extra money from some other means. Panibai, Tukka and Gotha, carried wood logs on their head and walked twelve kilometer to sell them in the city. Every day they were earning eight annas. All the three have to call loudly: "Do you want wood log, do you want dry wood log". After traveling four to five streets, someone calls and asks for cheaper rate. Desperate people dispose it and wash their hands. One afternoon, as they were calling in the street, Tukka saw a redman moving on horseback, he was afraid and dropped his bundle. "mother"..... He passed urine in his nickker. Gotha and

Pani took him and closed his mouth, they hid behind a small house. "Don't shout, otherwise they will beat us till the skin of the body comes out. They are our rulers, red people. I do not know what they are called." He gave some information."Father, what do they eat? They are looking like a cactus fruit. Do they belong to our country? or have come from the heaven or hell?" Tukka questioned his father. Gothanaik tried to remember Kenchajja, he once narrated a story. "These people are called Britishers. They came to India that is our land, to carry the business. Oh"..... he left a puff of breath out and continued. "India, was in the hands of small kings who were fighting for their frontiers. The Britishers are very intelligent, they used that opportunity and killed all Indian Kings and merged their Kingdoms into their British Raj" he stopped after sensing someone coming towards them. Innocent Tukka, asked his father, why people are afraid of these red people father? Are they cruel?" he saw his father's face. "yes, they are cruel, because they are afraid of one great man Gandhi. You know Kenchajja",.....he continued his narration. "Yes, I know him very well, he sits always on the pyol of the old lady Dhaki". He does not know anything about that. "Yes, the same. When Gandhiji visited Belgaum he went along with neighbouring village people. You know, he touched his hand. He has all great things about that old man Gandhi" he stopped and came out of the hiding place to confirm that British military has passed. After an hour, they held their bundles on their heads and started shouting on the streets.

It was 4 'O' clock in the evening, when they reached the stream near their village. The evening breeze started. Pani said, "there is nothing left in the house to prepare curry, why can't you make an attempt to catch fish in the pond". Gotha lit a beedi and sat on the bank of pond, Tukka removed his shirt and nicker to enter into the pond. He drowned inside the pond to catch fish. When he came up he threw a fish. Meanwhile his father completed his last puff. He fell into the pond went along with the bank. He found a hole and put

his hand in it. He sensed that there would be an eal. He called his son. "Tukka, come soon and search any other holes are there?" Tukka drowned and started searching the hole. Tukka replied, "Father here is one"; again drowned to search other holes." Keep your legs tightly", he caught 1/ 2 kilograms big ealfish and threw it out. Again he pushed hand inside the hole. He catches its tale, eal move forward with straightening its thorn on the body" Mother, I lost my hand, stupid eal hit my hand with its thorn, Tukka don't open the hole. Keep leg tightly I will see how it escapes", he further pushed his hand. The fish tried to escape from the other hole, but that was also blocked, again it turned back. Gotha who was waiting to catch its head easily catches it and pulled it out. "It is bigger to the earlier one", Gotha said while throwing it out. Then both father and son went through the shore and caught few big fish. The sun set in the west; cool breeze started blowing. Gotha came up and removed his dhoti and covers the towel, cleaned in the water squeeze to remove the water. Tukka cleaned the fish there. "ok it is enough for the day's curry" Pani said.

She prepared, curry with salt, chili powder, tamarind with some spice, Gotha completed a bottle toddy and brought one to his wife. Some small kids had already slept; women of the house were trying to wake them up to take their dinner. Gotha said, "Why are you forcing them, leave, morning they will eat" and he finished his dinner. After men, women sat for the dinner, Pani carefully distributing but men have completed everything so they have to eat with dry chilli powder. This is the fate of all Indian women. They have to wait till the male eat sumptuously, if anything left out, they will eat, otherwise they prepare or drink water and sleep. Family of Gothanaik is becoming large. Work distribution is not properly done. Some of the men are promptly doing their work, similarly women, some are spending time in discussion. Pamadi settled in a city near Kakapura. As he attained the marriage age, Gotha started searching bride for him. But Pamadi liked a girl whose father

and mother are teachers in Dundatoor. Pamadi, completely surrendered to her, some of Dundatoor people brain washed Pamadi, the girl who was doing her nurse training left for the sake of Pamadi. He strictly opposed her to take up the job. Many proposals came to him, but he refused. Gotha and Pani were not interested. But they sacrificed for the sake of Pamadi. After his marriage, he drinks and fights with his brothers. He left the village for months together. When he got his first female boy, Panibai went to her daughter-in-law with butter and ghee. The tension was relaxed; when he came to the village again, he decided to educate Kumari in right way. He changed his school from his village to Dundatoor, where his in-laws were teachers. A year after this, he took Kumari to the city where he works. The newly married have a tussle even after the kid. Pamadi is a short tempered fellow. His wife who passed her matriculation does not have any idea and seriousness in her life. That led the couple to quarrel every time. Kumari was fasting twice in a week. When Pamadi quarrels, she was not cooking food. When she picked up quarrel, then also the same situation. Kumari was going to school without food. Sometimes the neighbours took pity on the small boy Kumari, took him to their houses and gave food. Sometimes, without disclosing this to anyone sleeps in the corner. When he felt that hunger cannot be tolerated, he goes to meet his maternal uncle, who is working in a non-vegetarian restaurant. His maternal uncle Pandu lost one eye, when he was a small boy. His mother left the boy in front of the house and goes to fetch water. Before she returns, a hen removed one eye. The kid started crying in pain. His mother goes unconscious after seeing the horrible scene. He survived with one eye. Kumari's maternal Grandmother died after giving birth to Pandu' s younger brother. The two kids were looked after by their elder sister Pani. Hence, one-eyed Pandu have all adminratration to his elder sister Pani. "What is the matter" Pandu breaks the silence. Kumari narrated the entire scene. After listening to the story, he gave him some food to eat. When it became regular, he too became helpless because he

is working under an owner. Kumari was facing his fulltime fasting. The gap is widening. The difference was still continued. Pamadi was trying to control his wife and his wife wanted to rule. The two opposite views cannot compromise. Pamadi started beating her but the woman does not come under his control, she says that "I am also equally educated, I need respect, and he treats me like his slave. My father and mother are teachers, they have given me freedom, here I am feeling suffocation". Kumari did not understand what she was telling. But he understood that she was sending him to do some living. It was dark moon day. She sent Kumari to steal red chillies. Neighbours kept their chillies to dry and forgot to take. Pamadi's wife Phuli told Kumari to steal the chilli. While doing the work, he made noise. A lady who saw this went to the owner of the chilli as and told Kumari's name. The neighbours complain this to Pamadi; he got furious and started beating him to black and blue. When he revealed the truth, Phuli brought a burning fire wood and burnt his cheek. Pamadi stood answerless.

A week after this incident, Pamadi gave twenty rupees to purchase Rice and Jawar. She orders Kumari, "see Kumari you purchase some Rice, Jawar and some floor to me but don't reveal this to your brother" she told him bluntly. Kumari took cloth bags to purchase the items. He purchased cheap rice and jawar as his sister-in-law said. Kumari goes to nearby tent-hotel and ate something in the hotel because he was hungry. When he goes home, she opens her items and asks Kumari to go to his maternal uncle. Before he returns, she prepared some stuff and ate. When Pamadi returned from the factory, he saw the Jawar and rice which are useless. "What is this?" he shouted. Kumari did not raise his head. "Come on tell me, what do you do with the remaining money? Tell, otherwise I will peel your skin". shouted, " it is not my" opened his mouth, she intervened, "come on, take this and give to the shop keeper". Try to make the situation normal. He threw the stick and handed over-the bag to him. Kumari, painfully goes to the shop but

stood in front of the shop for a while, never opens his mouth, stood and came back. "What happened? Has he changed the items?" asked his brother. Kumari does not have guts to say yes or no. Pamadi held his ear and twisted, "Stealing money, what do you think?" he continued beating. Phuli, somehow managed the scene to end happily.

Kumari's maternal uncle Pandu' narrated everything in front of his sister after a drink. Before this, they thought that Kumari is very happy in Pamadi's house. Gothanaik decided to put Kumari in the hostel where his native village boy Kajara is staying already. When the schools were reopened, he sent him to the hostel. Kumari was in fifth standard when he joined the hostel. The hostel food was not good. The curry is tasteless, brinjals added in the curry contain long worms, less chilli less salt. Every Tuesday and Saturday rice was served. Powder milk curds of American milk powder causes scurvy. All the boys were infected by the scurvy. They locked the fingers to twist to control the itching sensation. Every morning they were running to the government hospital to take penicillin injection. Kumari bunks the classes to go to his village and fall into the village pond. Fish of the pond come and eat the wound, when they clean, the wounds get dry. He undergoes this trauma every year, because scurvy is a contagious disease. When one boy gets infected, the entire hostel gets infected. There were no bath rooms to take bath, more than sixty boys have only two toilets and a common bath place. The small boys never take bath for weeks and months. Even their heads were infected by insects and wounds.

The other problem of the hostel was sexual harassment. The small boys were used for sexual exploitation by matriculation students. It was common in the hostel. A boy who was used by the elders started exploiting the juniors. He liked Kumari, where ever he sleeps he goes and sleeps with him. He tempts Kumari to have sex with him. Kumari escaped from his torture. Seven students in a room reminds them a prison. Early in the morning, the taps are empty, no

water, all the boys take their brushes and go to wash their face at Civil court's backyard, Lions club's ground or Inspection Bungalow, Kumari felt hostel is better to his house. Since the problems in the joint family remain same. In summer holidays, he goes to work in others' fields to earn some money. He helped his brothers in cultivating land; carry manure in a bullock cart. Sometimes his father wakes up at four-o-clock in the morning to run the bullocks tied in front of the plough. It was so tedious and boring. He was feeling sleepy, cannot run properly, when the bullocks go out of track, his brother hit him with whatever he gets to his hand. "Can't you drive them properly" he scolds him. Another boring work Kumari wanted to escape was collecting cotton sticks and bundle them. With all these burden, he continued his education. But the boat which his family was travelling caught in the midst of a whirl wind. Gothanaik was known for his hard work he never sits idle. Either his hands or legs were always involved in doing something. All men and women, young and old in the village refer his name. He is the living model to the entire village. He never got disheartened or discouraged. He won many cases, purchased enough land, educated his children, and married two daughters. But the fate played a crucial role in his life. Pachi, a fair skinned beautiful lady fell in love with Gothanaik. She has one daughter and a boy. After this her husband Gamu, fell ill from yellow fever. His body completely turned yellow colour, cheeks swollen like balloon. Pachi just entered into her blooming youth. She regrets for her father and wants to remain faithful to her husband Gamu. But Gamu's cousin, Pujari Papa, Kishna, Maknanu tried their best to seduce her. She was the only beauty found in the village. When Gamu was healthy, he was doing hard work in the field. It was harvest; people were loading hay of ragi from their fields. Papa kept his eye on Pachi. He followed her from the village to her field. When she entered into the crop of cereal, he came and holds her tightly. Embraced pachi, coolly said, "Come on, rascals leave me, otherwise I will shout, you

know your brother Gamu is working in the next field, if he hears certainly he will kill you". She tries to release herself from the tight hold of his arms. "Pachi, I can promise on Sevabhaya, really I have gone mad, your beauty disturbed my sleep.

Your colour, hair style, the cheek and raised boobs Oh no. "... he tried to bite her rosy checeks. She shook her head. "I think you won't listen good words ye Papa, I am warning you, leave me", she raised her voice. Gamu heard this conversation. He recognized his wife Pachi's voice and fear in it. He rushed towards the place from where the voice is coming. Papa sensed the danger. When he saw Gamu, he pushed her and started running. "Ye unmanly fellow, if you are really a man, stay there you bastard. You are not fulfilling your own wife's desire. I know with whom she slept". He moved further. But Papa ran a furlong away. Pachi was weeping. "You bitch, what made you to come here, you could have sent mother or children. I think you are also willing such things. I am still strong enough, when I grow old and you feel that I am useless you can go with other men". He thought that it was her fault. "You men are all alike. At least he tried to quench his anxiety which he has on my body but you, you are a psychic. You have jealousy on my beauty. You never tolerate any male talk with me. It is my fate, because I am born beautiful" she blew her nose. In the evening, he went in search of Pujari Papa. But he escaped. Gamu drank toddy and scolded for a week but nobody opens his mouth. A week after, priest, Pujari Papuga appeared on the occasion of festival. Papuga, started shaking his body and turning his head. His eyes turned red hot, his lengthy hair thrown in front. He shouted, "Ye, my children listen carefully". The God Lord sevabhaya appeared in his body. An elder told the young boy to pluck some neem leaves. He holds his hand and requested the God. The God raised his voice..... "The sin is increased in this village. A lady in the north side house insulted me". The crowd was stunned. People started murmuring, "who is that" "who is that" " Insulting God, No, my Lord, who have the courage

to do so? You are omnipotent, you know everything..... we are black headed human beings what we know. As you wish to move we are moving my lord..... if you tell her name certainly we will punish her". Hattinaik requested the God. "No, no..... she should be banned and expelled from the village" Kishna who was beaten up by slippers from Pachi uttered without showing face. Gamu who was witnessing the drama entered inside the circle. Some people, stopped him, " Gamu, what is the matter? Why are you pushing and skipping in"? he did not listen. Priest stopped his words, except whisper of "Ha - Ha- Hu....." His tongue was dried, gradual head shaking was slowed down, with one eye, he tried to glance Gamu, Gamu bent down to remove his slipper, and beat the priest. The priest realized this and started running. The crowd followed him, Gamu ran faster after the priest and caught his hair and started beating him with slippers. The crowd dumb witnessed this. "Oh, no..... you defiled our God Lord Sevabhaya. You must be punished" Hattinaik exclaimed. "Who is your God? The one who attempted to rape my wife a week ago near my field, one who disappeared a week ago afraid of my slippers beating. Who is your God the one who is pointing out my wife who does not cooperate him when he tries to rape her. Listen Hattinaika, he is not true priest. He pretends that the God will appear in him. No God talks vulgar about a woman. I have punished Papuga, not the Lord. I was searching him from a week, but he was hiding. Today I got the bastard." He returns back to the circle. Many people know his bad behavior. No one is ready to support papuga. "Oh! He defiled the God, what are you thinking, come on kill him, my children. Kill him. Such woman has no right to live, crush him, knock him down". He was talking desperately. Not even a single voice was raised in favour of the priest. The crowd disappeared, the priest collapsed there.

This incident kindled fire in the hearts of those who were dreaming about the lady. Some of them were making a Herculian task to divert Pachi's attitude towards them.

A year after this incident, Gamu fell ill. People started talking, it is because he beat the priest, that to be, when God has appeared in him. The God punished him, as you sow so you reap. The rumour spread to the surrounding villages. The dirty minded priest, who never takes bath gradually started getting importance in the village. As the public memory is short, priest did not dishearten, in turn many worshippers came to him. Pachi's bad days were started. Kishna openly invited her to have sex with him. "Come on Pachi, now, you are starning without sex, your husband lost his strength, you are still like a mad horse, nobody can control you, come, lifelong I will co-operate with you". He caught her hand in public place. Pachi did not lose her temper. "Go and see where is your wife? With whom she is sleeping to earn money for your evening drink. You eunuch, I know how much power you have. First, satisfy your wife. Whole day sitting somewhere in the village, talk of others, evening watch the faces of those who drink, if someone offers little drink without hesitation drink. When she has a sexual urge, you start snoring". She sensed loosing his grip. He walked out without turning his head. This persuades her to search a male who can controle the gossips and rumours on her.

It was the second day of Deepavali festival, all girls and women wore their traditional red dress, made up of glass, coins and handy work. Inside the temple, men were involved in traditional prayer. The main singer was singing songs, Gothanaik was sitting in the midst of the group, and he has two sticks to beat the drum which is made up of the buffalo's skin. Some of them were playing bronze plates. To play drum one need to have experience and energy. He has to play according to the rhythm of the voice. Outside the temple women are dancing in a circle. They were all curious about the drum player. "Who is playing drum" all women asked each other. Only Rajanaik, who grew old was playing the drum, nobody touched the drum stick. But this time Gothanaik took this responsibility. The dance was stopped for a while to confirm the person who was playing the drum

"Oh! It is Gothaniak". They whispered. His black complexion was attractive by the white cloths and a colourful turban with which he covered his head. When he raised his hand, his muscles are visible. "There is some attraction" Pachi uttered herself. "Yes! He is the right choice. He is the only real man who never goes behind any woman, never hurts others' feelings that to be a woman I do not know whether he will like it or not. Let us try Pachi, try. What happened to the saint Viswamitra. Menaka disturbed his prayer and made him to accept her". She stared at him. Gothanaik was completely involved in beating drum. A woman who was standing near Pachi whispered. "Ye look at him, my God! what muscles he has and today he is looking handsome know"? All women appreciating him. "Come on, look at me come on, one two, three....." she started counting the numbers. Gotha, incidentally rose his head. He saw all women. He just turned his eye ball. The rhythm failed; he suddenly set right the beat. After a while, he tried to look, at she was still staring at him. Now actually the rhythm of heart and his hand both missed. The old man stopped his song. "What happened son, you are perfect player, never missed the beat. What happened? Is it not good? Come on, correct yourself. Otherwise you have to repent" Gotha felt ashamed. But heart is not accepting the advice of the old man. The beauty of Pachi disturbed his heart and mind. He was in dilemma whether to leave playing drum and sit aside to see her or continue. He tried to hand over the sticks to the old man. He nodded his head and told him to continue. He saw her, she also signed to continue. Gothanaik was over whelmed "Pachi, I never dreamt, the village male are running behind her." He was happy. At last he got success to give the stick. While going out, he signed her to come away. The crowd was enjoying the song and music. The lover slipped away. He goes behind Badua's harvest place, where people will not easily come. It is an isolated place, a thick bush had grown. She followed him like hypnotized. He was flying in the sky. He is not ready to accept this, what is this? a dream or reality? He pinched himself to confirm.

Before he confirmed, she stood infront of him. "It is true, I myself am surrendering to you. You know all the facts, many bastards have tried to use me some of them are my husband's cousins. But I don't know what happened to my heart. It didn't accept any one in the village. But.....you destroyed my heart". She moved forward. "That is what I am worried. I never imagined. And it is not my character to misuse the helpless woman for my sexual urge I am a firm believer in elders' sayings. A woman, land, money they have to come to us. We should not run behind them. Then only they become ours. You know Pachi, the first sight when I saw you on the pyol of the village well, I was flat. But I never expressed my anguish to you or any one. If it is in my fate, she will definitely come to me, so you are here". Again she felt proud that she is making friendship with a person who is matured, has respect towards her. She went near, heart was beating very fast, the breath increased and she is puffing the air like a steam engine. It is a new experience to her. He is absolutely like an iron rod. He is going to defeat her, destroy her and swallow her. She knows that she is like butter. He is like fire; immediately she melt down before she flew, he controled her, he took her in to his arms and gave a small hug. Her bones made a kind of sound. She moaned; Oh!" but.." he left her. You have to be obedient to me, and stay with me only like my wife. I don't like any one interfere in my love, never tolerate and spare. If you agree, I will look after you and your family permanently. You have to accept me whole heartedly and argue in favour of me what do you say?". He was waiting for her answer. She gives a smile "I wanted to be yours only. whatever you say, where ever you call I am ready, but don't punish me like them, come on tame me", She moved forward and swallowed his lips into her mouth, they forgot the world, the song and music still continued. Papuga got doubt. He had kept an eye on her, if not today, at least tomorrow, she will accept my love. But from the beginning, Kishna, Makhanu, Papuga were observing her moments, they decided to kidnap her to the abandoned house of the village and have gang rape. Then she will oblige

all the three of them. Papuga was desperately searching for her. He asked through sign." Where is she" Kishna signed, he doesn't know. Makhanu, whispered "come on guys, search her". Papuga tried to enter into the group of women. He purposefully touched his arm to the boobs of a young girl. "Mother," She cried. "What, nonsense, ye! Priest, why are you rushing like a sheep, it is a women's group. You don't have work? Going out or shall we....." before completing her sentence, he returned back and tells the same. "No, she is not there". Kishna! go to her house to confirm, I have small doubt in my mind fast, move" Makhanu goes inside the temple and gets confirmed. "Yes, not there". He goes inside the village, "Papuga, I will be back in a minute stay here, and keep watching" without responding to his reply, he ran fast. It was dark; a dog stared at him and started barking. He came back, "bastard, can't you know I belong to this village, that to be your neighbour". He scolded the dog and called a name, "brother, Gothanaik, is he there in the house". He waits for the reply. No voice replies to his question. "Hello, anybody awake, is your father at home?" again there is no replay, before something happens, better to go back. He returns. Papuga and Kishna wanted to submit their search report. Kishna said, "Brother, she is not there at home". Papuga "Nor she is seen here". Then where has she gone"? Kishna expressed his curiosity. "he is not there, and she has also escaped, where have they gone? " they saw him blankly. "What do you mean..... he?" Papuga desperately asked. "come on brother, simplify, we didnot understand" Kishna expressed his innocence. "Wait, something is floating in my criminal mind, if it comes true." He suspected them". Where? Where? have they gone" Makhanu closed his eyes. When opened Pachi was smiling. He pulled his hair. "Oh, no ..... it is true yes, it is true" he loudly uttered. "Makhanu, what is true da, why are you talking alone like mad. What is the matter, any problem tell me I will help you". Kishna asked him. "Now onwards she will be dream only, your dreams never come true. She has an affair with our staunch enemy Gotha. See. See.....how

he is staring like a wild mare". Makhanu showed the scene to Kishna and Papuga. "That dark charcoal! no impossible I won't believe this" Papuga refused. "You know only, turning your head and tell nonsense. Where was she? Can you imagine, for one hour both escaped. Where were they? He had sex with her, but I don't know where they had gone?" Makhanu suspected the place. "I think behind the temple" Kishna replied. "This is the safest place in Badua's harvest place where they are busy, behind the bush." Papuga guessed. "It may be true, behind the bush" Makhanu agreed. "come let us go and see any mark they have left. May be the spot you guess is right". One by one, they went in search of the identification. The song and music was still going on. Gotha's arrival inspires the old man. Again he threw the sticks towards him. Pachi smiled and signed to take. She was relaxed. It was a new experience, he broke her bones, her husband Gamu had never given that satisfaction. Her lips were still moving. Body was still shaking. "Really he is an iron rod". Pachi uttered. She felt ashamed and glanced both the sides whether anybody heard her voice or not. Makhanu moved slowly to trace out their sleeping place and collect the witness. He lit the match stick; Searched here and there: nothing was seen. Little further, the grass had fallen down. As she moved, the grass was scattered. "See, how they have enjoyed" Makhanu showed them. "He is lucky brother, the beauty selected a crow, see the fate". Papuga hit his forehead with his plam."Bastard, how dare he to keep an eye on a woman who belongs to our clan. Makhanu, do something, it is the question of our clan. The village people will talk and make fun on all male of our clan. There are no powerful men to control a woman in the clan". Kishna was boiling with jealousy and wanted of Pachi. He was not even ready to imagine she has slept with Gothanaik. Makhanu, silently smoking beedi. Papuga, remembered the nude body of Pachi and moaning. They sat where Pachi and Gotha had slept. "First, we have to catch them red handed, till then, don't spread this issue. Who knows? no one has seen, whether it is true or not we don't know. It is guess. If it is true, they

will be trapped in their next meeting. We have to spread a net carefully. It is a matter of the days that is all. "Ye, listen. Don't disclose this to anyone. It should be known to three of us only. If we spread this news, they will be alert. Do what I say" he told them his strategy.

The hide and seek activities of Gotha and Pachi had continued. When he goes to his north-field, he goes - via her house and sign her to meet. Accordingly, she tells some reason to her bed-ridden husband and old mother-in-law and escapes within no-time. Makhanu's team of spy is spreading a net to catch them red handed. A month had passed to trap them. It was not possible for the team of Makhanu to trace out the place where they were meeting. Now, he appointed a new team, he sent some people of Gotha's clan to give him information. It was evening the redhot sun was going to set down behind Sarathihill. Gotha called his lover to his new land. This news had reached to Makhanu. Papuga, Kishna and others decided to catch them while sleeping, they followed Pachi carefully. She goes to Gotha's field boldly without any fear. He received her in his field but they departed soon with some other directions. Makhanu, Kishna, Papuga and some elders of their clan surrounded them. Gotha did not change his expression. He asked Makhanu. "What is the matter?" Do you have any work with me? You could have told me early" casually he behaved. Makhanu searching for the words. "No.....han - Kishna's buffalo missed here so we all came here in search of that" he wanted to escape from the situation. "Is it? who told you that his buffalo has come to my field only". Gotha questioned. "No.....no, nobody told us just we guessed". Papuga answered. "Don't guess that way. Those who know people they are alert" indirectly he criticized. "What? what do you mean? We are spying you" Kishna told directly. "What for are you spying me? Tell me. What is the matter? Gotha caught them. "No, no, it is not spying Gotha, he assumed that you might be thinking in that way. Why should we do that? you are a responsible man. The village itself witnessed this. Sorry on his behalf. Kishna don't

talk nonsense". Makhanu convinced Gotha and returned back. After a while, she came back, they enjoyed the moments and departed. Papuga, again pulled his hair. "Before I go mad, please catch them. See, she has returned after meeting him. Oh, God, why are you playing with us? Let the culprit be punished". He lost his temper. "Don't dishearten man, every dog has its day. They think that they are smart. A cat thinks that, If it drinks milk with closed eyes the world can't see it. Let them enjoy. This sex makes a man to cross all extremes. It is a fever, the inner urge and outer fear always push them to commit mistakes till then we have to wait patiently". Makhanu expelled his philosophy. Papuga and Kishna glanced with each other and saw Makhnu's face.

The place became congested on the pyol of Goddess Guddamma. People brought some stones to keep under their seat to sit. Some were sitting on pyol of village well. Some were on Shevabhaya's temple. Some extended up to Gotha's hut. Pani was weeping without voice. All his children gathered except Pamadi and Kumari. Makhanu, Kishna and papuga were happy with their victory. Pachi was fearlessly sitting behind Pani. Leader of the village and elders of the village were already present. Leader - Hattinaika asked Gotha. "Shall we begin" he saw the crowd. Gotha nods expressing 'no.' Kenchajja, Huseni and others were disappointed by Gotha. "I have never imagined that this day will come and we are facing Gothanaik in Panchayat" Kenchajja told Huseni" it is not previous crime, he is man, he can have manywomen as he feels. But the question is Pachi, her husband is bed ridden. When the male of the own clan are ready to satisfy her sexual urge, why she chose Gotha who is of different clan" narrated the complete story. "How long we should wait Naik sir, people are waiting till morning, now you can start" Makhanu raised the question. "No, wait for sometime sir, master Kittanna is on the way, any moment he may reach." He appealed. "This is not upper caste Brahmin's panchayat, we called it for justice, and it is

our own community problem, why we need outsider to poke his nose." Makhanu questioned." Then we will go, come on Husseni, we are not Banjara's. Why should we sit here"? Kenchajja saw Gaduga's face. He turns and sits without expression. "I am not intending to tell you Kenchajja, you are our man. You belong to this village, and I am talking about master Kittanna what is necessary to invite him". Makhanu tried to apologize. "Don't talk nonsense makhanu. Kittanna is a well read man, he has attended several disputes and gave a true judgment. Whereever he goes, he upholds the truth. Don't take the issue lightly". Kenchajja shut his mouth. The crowd lost its patience. People were pointing out the leader of village Hattinaika. "Listen, Silence please. Don't talk yourselves. This is a serious issue, we start our discussion, let master come and join in between what do you say"? Kota the leader asked the crowd. Some people agreed and some did not, "We have to wait till master comes. He is not an ordinary person to begin ourselves!" A voice refused Kota's proposal. "Then....." Kota opened his mouth to say something. A voice loudly heared. "Master has come". There was silence, whole crowd stood up and showed respect to the learned man. He requests all to sit down. He apologizes for his delay. Kittanna glanced at every one. "I am sorry for the delay. I made you to wait, because one of the known persons died in the neighbouring village, I have attended the cremation and came straight way, not even taking butter - milk? Little I heard about the issue. Let Makhanu and others brief the issue". He saw towards Makhanu. Makhanu was waiting for the opportunity. "yes, we have caught, Gotha and Pachi who were sleeping in Chumana's field. The question is, how dare Gotha to look our women, ours is a strong clan, we are more numbered, half of the village belongs to us. But, Gotha crossed his limitations, if we mind; we can crush him to ass. No one comes to his rescue, even his own brother" he looked towards Peeku. Peeku got pricked by this statement "Makhanu, mind your business. I was born after him, came

from a single womb, though we have difference but we fight together". Makhanu felt gidding after hearing the words of Peeku. Gotha got moral support from his brother, he got hundred elephants strength in his arm.

Makhanu took breath and continued. "Ours is a tiger clan" he opened his mouth, Kittana broke his statement. "Why then she trapped Gothanaik" he exploded the bomb. "That is what we are going to ask now, when there are men available in same clan, this bitch went to him" he targets her directly. "Pachi, stood up, Are you sure that you are male?" She asked. The crowd was disturbed. Makhanu's wife and other women, " You bitch, how dare you to piont out my husband, I will kill you she rushed". Pachi was ready to fight with her but, Kittanna stopped. "Silence, Pachi, I will give you time to speak. Kindly keep quite otherwise, they will kill you." Pachi kept quite. Crowd got silenced.

"I believe you are all waiting for good result. There should not be any enemity amongst you. Because daily morning you have to face each other, it is not an end." Kittanna spoke to all. Washerman Shiva, who came late, broke his speech." Master, you are staying in Dundtoor, I am in other village. We don't know the ground realities. Who is Gotha? What is he? Is he a chief of the village? Or king what? His father travelled from Andhra border Guppan Koppa, Hattinaika Kota is witness for that. When he came twenty five or thirty years back, he was unable to clean his running nose, somehow he managed to became prosperous, it does not mean that he can keep others wife." He dug his history from the bottom. Kittanna patiently heard his argument. He glanced at Kota, Makhanu, Papuga and Shiva's face. Makhanu appreciated Shiva through his eyes. He realized it is not at all an issue. They wanted to condemn Gotha, look down upon and push him to corner, they called this panchayat. He turns his face and asked the leader of the village Kota to talk about the issue. Kota lost his control, "I, what can I speak master? you are learned, you know everything. Kindly you speak" wiped out the sweating appeared on his forehead. "Has anyone anything to say

regarding this issue can talk without hesitation." Kittanna gave an option. Nobody stood and say anything. "When I start talking, I won't give chance to any one to talk" he strictly warned. "Pachi, you speak about the issue, please keep in mind that it is a question of Gothanaik's future as well as yours. Don't be afraid of. This is the right time, and right place. On your opinion, the judgment is given. The free bulls which were trying to exploit you can be controlled." Kittanna sat down to listen to her words. The crowd was silent. All women supported her. They knew who is Makhanu, Kishna, Papuga and Gotha. Obviously they favoured Pachi and Gotha. But Gothaniak's wife Ponnibai felt that someone is stabbing at her heart. The expressionless pain was killing her. Because of family prestige, she swallowed her sorrow. All her younger children surrounded her. Gothanaik was sitting at the corner, as if nothing has happened, he is innocent, knows nothing. Pachi wanted to expel everything which she tolerated after his marriage, almost fifteen years, how these rascals invited her openly to have sex with them. How she rescued herself. "After all mental agony, I have experience by these three male chuvanists, priest Papuga, pretending Makhanu and Idoit Kishna. The first day when I entered this village, the priest started hurting my feelings. How can a woman accept a man who hurts her feelings? These rascals do not know how to impress a woman, how to win her heart. By mere torture and violence you cannot attract any one. You cannot love someone by force. They said that their clan has tigers, no they are not tigers, they are coward fox. So, I chose a tiger to rule me. Yes I accept openly. Though my words hurt Gotha's wife Ponniabai, who is like my younger sister kindly excuse me, I think you can understand the problems of a woman whose husband is bed-ridden and counting his days. I cannot express the trauma which I have undergone. If other woman was in same position, either she could have left this hopeless village or she could have hanged herself. I know who is a real man is. Even I know whose wife has what connections. I had only one option to move with him to avoid these people. I haven't slept outside my caste. I am

ready to live like his wife, if any one comes in between, I won't spare" she sat down. The crowd started whispering. Though the words of Pachi hurt Makhanu, he pretended as if nothing has happened. "I am not ready for that how can it be possible. She must leave him and select one among us! Makhanu asked her. Kittanna said "shut up". What are you talking Makhanu? Didn't you hear what she said earlier? It is not something to give. It is a, matter of feeling: a man cannot understand a woman. Pachi's heart opened to Gotha. His good manners touched her heart, once a heart selects someone he fills the gap, it is impossible to remove him and keep another. She openly accepted Gotha as her man. When society is accepting this extra-marital affair which is not taboo in your locality, though it is illegal you have to accept and neglect her. Don't hurt her again. If you do so, Gothanaik will intervene, then there will be tension, it is better for you to forget and live your own life." Kittanna sat down. He knows it that it was not the right solution; but Kittanna believes that will strengthen his moral courage and he will rule the village. Gothaniak's family is big, he has seven children; naturally village will keep quite. He kept his hand on the shoulders of Gotha and gave a piece of advise. Gotha pretend that he is ready to obey his views; immediately he goes Dundatoor and Gotha forgot all principles and goes to Pachi's house. Earlier they were meeting outside with a fear. Now fearlessly he visits her house. They started living like wife and husband.

The tension in the house was raised to its maximum extent. Ponnibai started passing comments to him through dog, cat, hen and her children. Gotha's diary was changed. He orders all works to his elder son Tukka and hides in Pachi's house: neglected Kittanna's paddy field and his own field, naturally it was affected on the yield. Ponnibai became desperate. Some nights he started spending with her. Pachi's husband accepted her wife's relation with Gotha which was inevitable and lost his breath in next monsoon. Her two children are being brought up in his care. When the rumour was spread that, Pachi gives birth to a female child which

looks like her friend Gothanaik, the society and Gotha's family digested this. Papuga, Makhanu discussed behind but did nothing,

But Ponnibai did not digest this. She asked him. Short tempered Gotha beats her with a stick and goes out leaving her in a pool of blood. Tukka, his wife and other children, poured some water in her mouth, broke a bangle to heat her head. After one hour, she got conscious. Tears rolled out of her eyes but nobody was there to understand her feelings and console her.

Pamadi became furious. It is not good enough in this age. His father has seen his grand children and at this age getting a daughter so stupid. He sent a word to his mother. She knows his tempter so she requested him to stay back. As the days rolleds, by, everything had changed. Gothanaik's daily visit to Pachi's house became twice in a day as he lost attraction, it changed to once in two days. But the enemity between two clans remained permanent. Gotha and his brother Peeku reunited. Jugali has all concern towards her brothers but her husband was playing fox cleverness with them. Except his lost three children, Kumari, the last boy, Jagga and a girl Summi all got married. Kumari somehow managed to go for higher education. Jagga failed seven times in Matriculation, Summi was still underage to get married. So the joint family has more than thirty members and the thirty differences started arising in the family. Tukka's wife never goes to the field. Every evening she pretends that "Oh! mother, it is pain, over hear. Hear some one is cutting my womb. I can't live I can't live" until the bread was given, after that she keeps quite. Ponnibai practiced taking toddy, when her life was disturbed by Pachi. Because of uncertainty, she consumed toddy to forget everything. She practiced to sell out Jaggery, rice whatever they grow in the field. She was almost addicted.

Gothanaik's attraction towards Pachi became less. He purchased few more acres of land and paid money to the government to put a rig bore in his land for irrigation. Even

he moves further to own a second hand tractor. Kumari stopped visiting the village, once in a year he comes to see his parents. He did not get job. Pamadi got many children. It was a problem to look after his family. The crowd in the house and hierarchy in the family led them towards worst condition.

Tukka's wife was given in charge of taking care of the cattle. Other three sisters- in-law are managing house hold works. In festivals, all elder people get their share of alcohol and few pieces of mutton. Tukka's wife picked up a quarrel on the issue and demanded their share in the property. Pamadi strictly warned that they have taken an oath in his marriage, till parents' death they are not going to divide their property. But she took her husband and children away and goes to coffee estate for commissioned work. The broker Sadu, the relative of Tukka's wife, brain washed her. "What will you get in that house tell me? Do they give half acre of land to you, for your service to the house? Nothing sister, nothing, come work. Make money, when you go back to your mother-in-law. Ponnibai is so generous. She loves her grand children takes you back to the house". It was Sadu who misled the couple. She took her big wooden box and packed up some cloth, some ration and went along with Sadu. Ponnibai requested her to stay back, but she refused.

Every Sunday, is a holiday in coffee estate. Tukka and his wife leave kids to play in the line and go to market. Both of them consume toddy bottle after bottle and bring ice - stored fish. The kids enjoy the stale fish curry. The last child who is not healthy died in the estate due to cold. Tukka blamed his fate and buried the boy in the symmetry. A week they showed their grief and adjusted to the normal course of life. In the corner of his heart, fear of his father and mother pinched Tukka. Four months they worked, he hesitates to go back to the village, what his parents and brothers will think, Sadu convinced him and took him to Kakapura. Gotha naik's family was shocked with news; no one said nothing Pamadi scolded both his elder brother and

his wife and asked them to stay at home. Tukka realized his fault and sweet words of Sadu. He decided to stop going to coffee estate. The money which they earned at the estate was invested in purchasing some sheep and goats. They handed them over to Tukka's father-in-law who is a shepherd. Latter on, they started stealing **some corn** and sell it to the petty shop and keeping money. Dhawla who was in charge of the tractor also stopped showing profit. Cheluva and Shanku are innocent, rendering donkey work in the family. Pamadi who comes in week–ends receives the feedback. He explains his father what is happening. Due to hard work, Gotha had done in his youth gets an unusual disease. He was admitted to hospital and a surgery was done. Pamadi looked after him as if he had spent the money from his pocket. He neglected his mother who spent money without his father's knowledge. He wanted to earn respect in the family. His father has the power, who is looking after everything, so he wanted to be near to him. It is possible to make some money. After his father, the next important place goes to Dhawala who is looking after the machine. Tukka joined Dhawala's party. Cheluva and Shanku and their wives know nothing about the politics. Whatever they say, they oblige and do their work. Dhawala's wife and Tukka's wife have similar opinion. Pamadi wanted to break their unity. But their strength was stronger. He wanted to play a key role in all decisions. Dhawala and Tukka do not leave space to him to enter. People of Kakapura were standing on tip toes to see the destruction of Gothanaik's joint family. His children are moving away from his control. Pamadi's efforts to take over the control of the family age still going on; by hook or crook he wanted to get it.

One fine day, Pamadi came with his wife Phuli; Tukka's wife did not tolerate him and said, "See, the queen has come; obey her order" she laughed. Pamadi controlled the thought. Again she continued, along with Dhawala's wife he moved forward, "What, are you talking useless lady, creating problems in the house, the money which you made has

forced you to talk like this" started teasing her. "Ye, who are you to touch my body, my husband never beats me. If you do like this, then there will be a problem". She hit back. Pamadi took a long wooden log and started blowing her. "Mother, help, he will kill me. Help, where is he? aren't you a man? don't have power? can't you stop him"? blamed her husband Tukka. The whole village gathered to witness this drama. This was the first quarrel picked up in Gotha's family. Previously some verbal exchanges took place. But now absolutely it was a fight. "Now, the house will divide" Makhanu predicted. "No brother, somehow they manage to suppress these things." Papuga was disappointed. They wanted to aggravate the family members. They tried to kindle the fire but it became smoke but not the flame. Gothanaik, managed the situation diplomatically. The situation was balanced for the time being. But the inner tension was hidden like a burning charcoal covered with an ash.

Tukka and Dhawala decided not to work in the field. Only Cheluva and Shanku were loading the hey of ragi which was cut and bundled a month ago. The road was not marked properly. They have to take their carts through Bhaty and Lakuma brothers field. They are the staunch followers of Kishna, moreover, they belonged to the same clan. According to the conspiracy, they picked up the quarrel in the field. Younger Bhatya came and caught the nose-thread of bullocks to stop the loaded cart. When he stopped the fast moving loaded cart, the upper load which was heavy has made the cart to become upside down. Before knowing what is going to happen, the loaded cart fell down. "What do you think? Is this your fathers field to drive you cart"? Bhatya argued. Cheluva requested him, "why brother? all village carts are moving here only. Why are you not allowing ours only? It is injustice" he told the truth. "No, let everyone move, but you worms of Gotha should not go here" Bhatya strictly banned them. "why, I say why, my father have affair with your mother or your wife. Bastard who are you to stop

us", he caught his collar and started blowing on face and body, Both the brothers nicely thrashed him. "Mother, the Gotha's children are killing, help me, brother, where are you"? shouted loudly. Lakuma was working in the other side of the field. Came running along with his brother in-law and a group of people. After looking his brother's position, they took both Cheluva and Shanka to the task. Lakuma's brother- in-law tried to control the crowd and hit their back with the fist. They left them unconscious.

The message reached Gotha. He came to rescue his children. He gave them water and slowly treated them to get conscious. Cheluva narrated the episode. Gotha did not speak. He reloads the cart and asks them to drive. The whole family went in search of Bhatya and his brother Lakuma in the evening. The opposite clan people were well-planned. They united to attack on Gothanaik's family. The villagers were stunned, there will be a war going to take place between Makhanu and Gotha. Nobody is ready to control them. They were hiding inside their house to watch the free entertainment. Bhatya purposely walked in front of his house, when the women saw him, they caught him and thrashed him till he became unconscious. Then a big group came with sticks in hand.

Gotha and his children were also ready to give back. The fight was started. Makhanu who never came in front, tried to destroy his enemy putting gun on Bhatya brother's shoulder. Peeku and his both wives and children gather to support Gothanaik and cousins. Pani took big thorny bush and stood on the way "If you are really male, come bastards. I will teach you" move forward. Makhanu realized that he did a mistake of thinking that nobody will come to Gothanaik's rescue. His love Peeku's second wife, changed her party. "If you have moustache, if really you are men come. I beat you with chappals. Men stayed back. They cannot fight with a woman. Gotha decided to kill his last son, Jagga and send the whole Makhanu's clan to Bellary Jail. He searched for him. Afraid Jagga, hid behind his mother.

The noise went up to twelve O clock in the night. When the spirit of arrack went down, every one became calm. "Sh! My arrack temptation has gone down", blamed themselves. Some went to the arrack shop to take little more. But arrack shop owner did not open the door. They told him, "Tomorrow we will see how you are going to sell in this village. It is too much; arrack must be available whenever we want it. Idiot denying to give; is he giving from his father's house? Government is producing for our use" half an hour they shouted in front of the shop and went back to their homes. Gothanaik and Ponnibai decided to go to Dundatoor at midnight to reveal the incident and seek suggestions from Kittanna. Later if master gives permission, they decided to lodge a complaint at police station. When they walked away to go to Dundatoor, Makhanu, Kishna and Papuga stood in the midst of the narrow passage.

Their intention was to stop them and quarrel. Gotha pushed them back and crossed. They widened their eyes and stood dumb. They go back speechless. "It is five 'O clock. It is not good to wake up master in odd time. What shall we do? He started imagining. "It is almost 5 O clock know, let us go to hotel to pass time, at six we will meet him" Ponni told him. They go to the hotel which is known to them. Every day people go there to have their breakfast and tea. The owner is known to everyone; even he speaks Gorboli with them. When he saw Gotha and Ponnibai, " What is the matter Gotha? anything serious? why are you here so soon". Jaya the owner of the hotel enquired. " Nothing sir, we wanted to meet master Kittanna. Thought that he will be busy with his work so decided to go in the morning. Have you prepared tea"? Gotha told Jaya. "why do you want to meet him? What is the reason? something might have happened in thanda: what is the matter?" He was eager to know the matter so that he can spread the rumuor to his customers. Gotha knows this. So, he did not show any interest. "Give me tea first, do not show interest in that matter" he disappointed Jaya by saying this. "Why are you

getting angry brother, out of curiosity I asked, if you don't want to tell, don't tell" he began to prepare tea. He removes ash from the fire place, collected it in a bowl and threw away. Sprayed water in front of the door, cleaned the door step. Came inside and took a clean vessel and poured half bowl water, added some sugar and tea powder and boiled it for some time. Meanwhile, he cut onion and green chilies for breakfast to the customers. He mixed black-gram floor to prepare Indian dish. He added salt, baking powder, little soda, mixed it at proper shape and washed his hand. Add little milk to the boiling tea. Put a filter to the mouth of kettle and pour. Again he pours two teas into two little cups. "Your tea is ready" handed over them to the old couple. Gotha galloped in a single effort, Ponnibai, put her effort to cool. "Drink fast, master goes out, and then we have to wait". He stood to move, Ponni, drank fast and followed him. After the temple, they took a turn to an old house, which was very big. They stood at the door and called. "Master, are you in the home", his wife came out, "Oh! Gotha, what is the matter? Your wife accompanied you so early what is the matter"? she asked. No mother, there was some quarrel in the village, so we came to take master's suggestions". He narrated the whole episode. Kittanna came out asking. "Who is there? what is the matter?". This is our tenant Gotha, they came to meet you, are you coming"? his wife replied. Kittanna was surprised to hear this. "Come in. Why are you standing out? when did you come? What is the matter? Is everything ok in Kakapura"? without taking breath, he enquired. "There was a quarrel in the village master. It is because of road; Makhanu took this opportunity and made the whole clan to revolt against me. They gathered to threaten in front of my house. I am fed up with this master. I wanted to drag them to station." He gave a pause. kittanna did not speak. Gotha and Ponni sat down. "Ok, let me see, don't take a nasty decision. Remaining silent is the answer. If you go to court against them, they will harm you, I will do something. Don't worry". He consoles them. It was a serious assembly. Great people of Dundatoor gathered. "It

is not the problem of Kakapura alone. It is a problem of all villages, the group of lazy people has increased. A woman goes to work, all men sit idle, what is the best they can do, except loose talk and thinking evil of others. Gotha is a hard worker, do not involve in illegal things, he won't believe in groupism, that is his fault". Elder persons who have closely seen Gothanaik and gathered information about him commented." But, the other face of Gotha you don't know sir, please don't appreciate much. The superiority made him to behave like bull. All his children are not good as you think". He started cooking up a story. Kitanna suddenly intervened. "What are you talking, tell me how many complaints you have received about Gothanaik and his children. Don't cook up the tales like this. It is an effort to damage the image of some one. It is only jealousy, nothing else. He and his children never go to anyone's house, they won't simply waste their time. Every year, they are purchasing lands. Some of Gotha's children are educated. These are matters to Makhanu and his battalion. He wanted to put all behind bars: but I requested him to drop the idea. If the same thing continues again, I will not stop him". He tries to give a strong dose of threat. All elders pointed out Makhanu's fault. Some advised Gotha to compromise the issue there.

The inner tussle began in Gothatnaik's house. The gap of relations is widening. Tukka convinced Dhawal to wait till his daughter's marriage. So they kept quite. Gotha and Ponnibai's wish was to marry their granddaughter when they are still alive. Tukka brought a bride groom and arranged marriage soon. He did not even bother about his sister and two younger brothers. A year after the marriage, he told his father to stay back from the responsibilities. The news reached Pamadi, he became furious. Why he took that drastic step. Dhawala held all the responsibilities and running the family. He sold all that they have harvested and the profit, he invested to dig another bore well. Unfortunately, it got failed. Pamadi encashed the issue to replace Dhawala

and take financial responsibilities. But it could not be possible. Gothanaik became silent, evenings he takes a bottle of toddy and remains aloof. Dhawala and Tukka decided to take a strong decision. On the same evening, they picked up quarrel with their mother Ponnibai. It was pre-planned. When Ponnibai was shouting, Gotha came to her rescue. Dhawala and Tukka beat his father very badly and left him in the pool of blood. The family was shocked by this incident. Cheluva and Shanka tried to protect father but Dhawala misled them.

Village heads and elders gathered in Sevabhaya's temple. Gothanaik had few bandages on his head. People of surrounding villages got shocked. The only one joint family that survived after independence it got now divided. Gotahnaik is a balanced man, but the new generation touched with democracy and air of freedom lost their patience. Makhanu, Papuga and Kishna drank milk to celebrate Gothaniak's decline. But Kenchajja and Huseni tried to patch up the relation. Pamadi was not ready to accept. "They broke my father's head, something might happen, where should we search. Whatever happens we are going to share our property now only. Let Tukka, Dhawala go out. We five stay together" strictly warned. Kumari got failed in his master degree final year. When he heard the news, he completely sank in depression. Pamadi called, Shanku, Cheluva Jagga and Kumari. "See..... you must say we all stay together, but we wanted to drive them out. Shanku, Chaluva will work in the field, I will manage everything with father". He expressed his idea to separate Dhawala and Tukka. He did not forget to brain wash Cheluva and Shanku. "What will you get? Tukka has 100 sheep with his father-in-law, his daughter married; all boys are going to be still. Dhawala looted money from the last crop!" He gave all details to them." So, you have to tell that you want the land to be divided. In case you say no, then you will be the slaves again. Remember, Dhawala ever come to the field. Tukka helped you in agriculture work. Now think". He left a worm of suspicion in their brains.

Kumari was unhappy with his father's decision. He decided to leave the village forever. But he did not get through the examination. Without degree, without job, where can he go? He thought for the whole night; all of a sudden, the built kingdom of his fathers collapsed. Along with that, his dreams were also broken. Before taking decision they could have thought about Sumi a younger sister. Jagga is still in college. What about Kumari who is in crises now. He did not get sleep. He rolled from left to right and right to left. His mother's health is also not good. "Before I go mad, I have to leave this house". He was firm in his decision. Morning, before others woke up, had he woken up and left the village. No one knows where he has gone and what has happened to him.

Kumari was penniless, when he left the village. He goes to his friend in Dundatoor and asks for hundred rupees for travel expenses to reach Dhule. He was staying with his juniors in the hostel. When the hostel was closed for vacations, he was thrown out. He spent almost ten years in Dhule, so he knew many people there but how to ask them. He wanted to survive and get position in the society, no brother, parent can sacrifice for nobody. At last he went to his senior friend's house and requested him to give some place to stay. He knew Kumari very well so he gave some place. After a month, he got his result, he passed M.A. examination. He received the marks card and knocked doors to get a job. A known person invited him for a teacher post, Kumari inevitably accepted his invitation. He wanted to take up research to get a good job, but the fate did not allow him. It was a small taluk, the members of the management were illiterate. "What boy you are not saluting me? What is the matter? Do you want to continue in the college or you want to lose your job"? Threatening speeches he heard every now and then. Kumari got hurt by these comments of the management. There was no other way, until he gets a good job, he has to continue there. When bad time comes, it won't allow the person to live in peace. A group of mischievous

was student's wrote about Kumari and one of the female students name on the walls of the college. Management took the issue seriously and served him a notice to give explanation. He tried to give clarification but headless members were not ready to listen to him. "Without fire how could flame rise" the president, old doctor Kulkarni asked. Kumari was caught in the nexus of scandal. The epicenter of these rumours was the previous English teacher who teaches English in High school got chance to teach in college. But he belongs to the same community. Hence, he escaped. Poor Kumari was badly fixed. Later, some Xerox copies of letters were pasted on the walls with Kumari and the girl's photographs. Now the meeting was called to give a fare well party to the new English teacher Mr. Kumari decided and he did it.

Kumari lost all hopes in his life; at least he felt secure when he was in the college. He was terminated from the college. Again he goes back to Dhule. "What power this city might have got. It never says no to anyone. Whoever comes live happily and peacefully? What is going to happen will happen" he consoles himself and cheers up to do some new things. A letter reached him late; it was his brother Jagga who has written.

"Mother got stroke due to high blood pleasure. She is hospitalized, I don't think she will recover. Come and see her face". Kumari collapsed on the bed. He had a great attachment with his mother. Before settling in the life, she dies means it's a great loss. He requests his friend to loan him some money and started his journey.

She was sleeping calmly. His sister Sumi was roaring in front of his brother Kumari. "How can I control? Tell me, If she dies, I will commit suicide" she did not control her grief. "No, dear, you should not tell like this. I am still alive, don't worry, I will be back soon, then there will be no problem. Come on wipe your tears, she won't die so soon. She has to take care of your children, my children and Jagga's. Then only she dies". He turned his face to wipe tears filled in his eyes. He was encouraging both brother and

sister. His father lost his charm. He just puffed air out of his heart, his feelings choked his throat. His mother once opened her eye. She saw Kumari for a while. She wanted to tell something but there was something held back, she tried to talk, tried at last and breathed last. The opened eyesight is conveying thousand matters. Gotha broke down, he wept and wept till he got unconscious. She was a companion who supported him to build the life. She never hesitates to work in rain, cold or scorching sun, saved money to purchase land saved coin to feed her children helped the poor and needy with both hands. Such a great woman departed from him. All her children gather to do the last rites. Kumari stayed fifteen days to perform all rituals. His brothers came to attend the rituals, they did not talk much, they all settled well in the village. They did not ask even for the courtesy sake about their positions.

Kumari was struggling to settle. He wrote many examinations but in interview, when they demanded bribe he got failed. Every failure taught good lessons in his life. Sometimes he felt that simply he got education. He could have worked in the fields like his brothers, he would have stayed peacefully in the village" This world of education is more dangerous than illiterate. At least the innocents are convinced; here everybody thinks he is superior. jealousy, hierarchy, discrimination, exploitation are natural phenomenon in the world. He wrote FDC examination and wanted to attend the last interview. As he wished, he got an interview call letter to his address. He was confused, whether to attend or not; he had some money which will be sufficient to go to interview at Bangalore and come back to Dhule that is the train fair. He asked his senior, "Same thing will be repeated, what is the use of attending interview" nervously revealed. "Don't be in that impression Kumari, If your time is good, you will pass, after all you are going to lose hundred twenty rupees, don't neglect. In case you left this, then you may feel repented, I could have attended the interview. Don't give room to suspision go and attend, leave

everything to God. He is the one who is the decider. We are just human beings" He forced Kumari to attend the interview.

He left Dhule after dinner and reached Bangalore at 8 O' clock in the morning finished his routine activities in the station and walked out in search of the place where he is supposed to give interview. Qualified candidates' documents were verified, their certificates etc. He has to complete the formalities and sit in front of the interview room. After interview, they were going to announce the results. He was not sure about his selection. Somehow he has to kill the time, instead of sitting in the station, he stayed back to see who will be selected. A group of the boys discussing how was the interview, how they answered for all the questions. Kumari lost his hope after hearing their discussion. "It is a eyewash, the posts are booked already, they took bribe and booked all the posts, bastards why they invite people like us for interview". He himself spoke and consoled. "It is a matter of minutes, they put up the selected candidates names, just have a look and start my journey" he decided. At 5.30 pm attendar brought a list of the selected candidates. The crowd gathered to know, they were not leaving him to put up the notice on the board. Attender shouted "leave the place to put this list don't pull me. See, if you do this, I won't put up this list". He turned back. The crowd became silent. Kumari was sitting under the tree, watching the drama. The list was put up on the board. Those who got selected felt happy and returned home. Those who weren't selected blamed their fate and the committee members, they consoled themselves for better luck in the next interview and left the KPSC campus. Kumari was sitting under the tree; he had that experience, so he did not bother. He thought to go at last when the crowd will be less. He went carelessly to see the result. But after looking at the board he was shocked. The first name in the list is Kumari S/o Gothanaik." He glanced at the strange face. Kumari got thrilled. "Thank you friend I got selected. This is my fifth KPSC interview; these people at last considered my sincerity". Kumari went inside the

office to enquire about the order. A clerk who was sitting in the corner briefed about the formalities. "So soon order will come, where are you coming from? Don't know the procedures. After fifteen days there will be a provision list which will be announced on the board. If any anomalies or discrepancies have taken place, candidates will be given a month's time to give their grievances. Then follows the police verification, caste validity etc., which almost will take another three months". He briefed complete procedure. "Oh, it is not so easy to get the order" Kumari whispered and returned after thanking him. At last, a member of Gothanaik's family entered government service. He is the first generation graduate in the family. His father never appreciates his talent or encourages him, because he did not know the value of education. He was a man of thumb impression. His mother and father once uttered" our neighbors boy, who is junior to him got police job, I don't know what are you studying, whether it is true that you are educated or not, they expressed their doubts after consuming alcohol. Kumari was really hurt by the words. He did not reveal this before any one because they were all alike. But his mother wanted him to get a good job and settle in his life. When he first got his admission in Dhule in the world's best college, she purchased a old suitcase from a person who returned from Goa. She gave him some money and some ragi. Kumari was very happy for that, otherwise he had to take an old trunk of his ancestors. If he could have taken the same to Dhule, he would be the laughing stock. His first day in the college was very bad. All the girls who were all from well off families studied in convent schools. The fat girl, who was very fluent in English entered into the class. She was talking with her friends. "No ya, yes ya". Kumari and others got tensed. They did not understand even a single line. She was very communicative. Mabya, lost his hope to continue in English literature. "Excuse me what is the formality to change the combination"? he expressed his wish too; Kumari tried to support them and stay with him in his class. The boys who passed their examinations at

government school are very poor in English language. It is like a Greek and Latin to them. It was because of mother tongue education policy of the state. People who were fighting to implement Kannada language, who are in favour of the development of Kannada language, they were sending their children to the English convents but denying the poor to be studied in convents and promoting the government school education. Duality made the rural and poor to find it difficult to learn English language which is alien to them.

Kumari's team found it difficult to cope up with language and literature. A month passed; an old professor came to their class. He was the class teacher and teaching them "Milton's life of Dr. Johnson". It was very difficult to understand Milton or Johnson. Kumar expressed his inconvenience in the language. Prof. Gavin Said, "See Kumari, English is not our mother tongue. So we cannot learn it as we learn Kannada or whatever the mother tongue you speak. Learning is a process, no one can be the master over night in English. It is very easy to learn English rather than Kannada. If you put effort with a mere dedication you will learn English. Don't take those girls as your model. They have learnt it from their birth; it is great that with all burdens you have reached up to here. Their circumstances are different". Prof. Gavin convinces the boys, then on words they never turned their back. Choudari was always found in the library. He was focused as the class representative for second year B.A. because there was a system in the college that, those who score highest in exams in the class will be the class representatives. Many were in the race, the whole class declared Choudhari because he was considered as a book worm. Whenever they go, he was found reading.

After the examination, the college was re-opened in June. The results were out in August. The students had a habit of hiding their marks cards. When Prof. Gavin came to their class of second year B.A optional English, he was in charge of English department association and asked about the topper in first year's examination. A boy in the last bench

told one hundred fourteen for two hundred. Everyone thought that he will be the highest scorer. Prof. Gavin also going to declare that he is the topper. Kumari stood and told Prof. Gavin that the score is one hundred seventeen. Girls stopped talking. The girl who was talking much was shocked "What that fellow! Hum, how could it be possible, he doesn't know the language, he studied in government school, poor chap" she was giving a lecture, but students of his group had all appreciation to Kumari, they wished him, some of them announced that, "at last, this village boy won" proud of Kumari. He was the hero in girls quarter. Prof. Gavin called him. "I am proud of you my son". Hugged him and gently beat his back. "It is a mark of dedication. A boy from a remote village, five hundred Kilometers away from Dhule who is staying in the hostel scored highest. Talent is not valued just on an appearance or even on richness in money". Prof. Gavin admired his symplicity, dedication in the class. Some of the students commented: "What is this da, if we could have studied, we would have scored more than that" Reddy commented. Kumari became well known in the college. All rural friends of Kumari supported him for his success. Then onwards he got success. He was a good folk singer. He composed many lyrics. Kumari used to give radio programmes on various issues. He was hard working, he never sits idle. Whatever topic is given, he tries to collect the information and write a paper to present in radio. Some dramas he directed to the youth. He was the centre of attraction in the college.

All the teachers invite Kumari either for invocation or entertainment. He completed his Bachelor's degree and joined University for his higher education. The intimacy which they were getting at the college was not seen in the departments. The worst part of the University department is the teacher's superiority and mean mentality, they think that they are the creators like God. They always exploit the students. When a student enters into the department, he must behave like a first standard boy. He should not in-shirt,

he must apply oil and neatly combed his hair. He must keep his head down and never rise up. Whenever he meets a teacher, he may not respond to that. One day Kumari's friend, Reddy, took him to the Professor in order to take a book. The teacher was discussing in a closed room. When that aunty came out of his room, Reddy pushed Kumari to enter in. Short tempered professor, without listening Kumari, abused him. "What nonsense is this? Without knocking the door you are entering my room. Is't your father's room? Nonsense fellow. Where do you come from? You don't have manners. How did you pass the degree." Kumari's eyes filled with tears. He is punished for some one's fault. Meanwhile, his class mate Aunty slipped off from professors room. Kumari received his teachers anger. He stood bending his head down. After a while, he became normal. Short tempered Prof. 'x' moved his lips. "I am sorry Mr. Kumari, I hurt you." He lit a cigarette and started putting out smoke.

Post graduate classes in the Universitys in India are like primary schools. Students have to obey. Whatever the teacher says; they have to nod their heads like deaf and dumb. Outside world call the universities learned scholars as Intellectual bastards and it is true also. Because many teachers openly argue, "when I have scored below 55% marks, how can I give sixty to you?" The second general opinion on Indian Universities is Professors' sexual scandals and their hidden agenda. Mean minded Professors are more castists. But some of them think that they are secular. But these secular are more dangerous. A most secular professor invited a junior girl to his private room. "See your senior accepted my invitation and secured highest, I mean topper, gold medalist. If I mind, I can do anything". He mesmerized her. Poor girl spoiled her purity for marks.

When M.A. final result was out, Kumari was shocked. He got failed in fiction paper. He did not control his feelings. He had broken down started weeping in front of the department clerk. No one was there to wipe his tears. He spent a few hours and goes to his hostel. Those who have

passed were enjoying the moments. His classmates whom he had taught literature somehow passed in the examination. Many are surprised that Kumari had failed in the examination. "Such intelligent student has failed. Really it is injustice", some union leaders met Kumari, don't worry brother, if you are willing and manage to bear our expenses, we are ready to fight on your behalf. Within no time we close the university, lock out all the departments, break the street lights, even set fire to the buses. What do you say?" waited for his replay. Kumari does not want any nuisance should be created in the campus. These professors who praised his intelligence and used his talent disappeared. He openly admited that he had failed. The Government notified to recruit for the lecturers and announced to give 15% pecent weightage to those who have studied in the rural areas. Most of his classmates were fortunate enough to get the job. Kumari was really unfortunate, though he belongs to the rural backward village, he was admitted in a hostel at a big city. The second shock was he failed in final year examination.

Another shock that had shaken his roots was that his joint family was quarreling for the division. There were two groups in the family and it was divided. He remembered his past. Immediately he felt that he wanted to see his father. A strong nostalgia haunted him. He applied for a week leave and started his journey to Kakapura.

Road is still difficult to walk, bushy thorns extended on both sides of the road. He tried to remember the days he walked on the road. At least thousand times, he carried twenty kilogoram jawar on his head to floor in the floor mill. "Nothing has changed" he whispered.

After the division of his family, may be after a decade he is visiting. He met a boy of Kakapur, who accompany from Dhudatoor to Kakapur almost three and half, four kilometers. The boy did not recognize Kumari who is the son of Gotha Naik. He himself going across the road carrying twenty kilogram fish brought from river Tungabhadra. "Bhiya are you going to Kakapur? Are you a

stranger to this area? Whose house are are going to? How will be, your relative?" Hundred and one questions he asked. Kumari felt happy with that. He asked, "What is your name?" "Naga" the boy replied. "What is your father's name?" again Kumari asked. "Dhanu Naik: the boy stubbornly replied. "Oh you are son of Dhanu, nice. You know your father is my classmate. You know the great deeds of your father?" He asked. "You know my father?" the boy surprised. "Yes, how can I forget he is my classmate" He tries to give a shock. "What do you mean, your classmate, I heard he did not go to any school". He annoyed. "No, no, when we started going to the school, we had no clothes to cover our bodies. Some of us had knickers, no shirts; some of us have shirts but no knickers to cover the lower parts". Kumari went back to his past. Naga interferes immediately "Chi, it is shame to walk without knickers, isn't it?" He asked Kumari. "The days were tough my dear, we ate only leafy vegetables, without salt and chilly for some days. And some days, we ate horse gram without salt. My mother added acidic mud to get little taste. We had never seen five paisa till the age of twelve, you know?" He tries to narrate the drought of nineteen hundred and seventy. Naga was listening with interest and asked "what is your name then?" Kumari, found interest, "Why do you want my name? just listen my story" He disappointed him. "No, I am not particular about your name, continue". He stopped. "Your father Dhanu has a nickname you know" he gave a pause. "Nickname, I do not know particularly not even heard people calling him by that name, but....." He expressed doubt. "Yes he has a name, called Nigra" He saw his face. "Nigra! what does it mean? it sounds interesting". Naga showed curiosity. They already crossed down mango tree of Venkatraman Bhat's field. Naga was worried about the story. Whether, the gentleman completes his father's story before they could reach the high raised border of the tank of the village. "Do not worry, I can guess, you are very much eager to know your father's story. I will complete it before we reach toddy Ramachandra's Chowdi temple". He consoles him. "What, learned man, you

read mind? You spoke what is going on in my mind. It is too strange" Naga was afraid for a moment. "It is not possible, any one to do so you know. But people believe that black magician and horoscope readers, palmists are the people who boast that they know everything. When god is unable to predict what is going to happen how these poor human beings can". He gave a small lecture. "How can you say master? I have seen Dundatoor black magician Revga threw something on his opponent's body which became scorpions. One of the magicians ate cactus and brought out color papers from his mouth. What is it all? Do you say lie? Then tell me how the scorpions come from? Where does he bring all the papers?" Naga told matter of fact innocently. "No Naga, it is a black magic. He knows all these things. If he might have created scorpion, where might they have gone? After a while single scorpion is not seen. What happened, where they go? It is a make-belief that is all". He wanted Naga to know this fact. But Naga did not understand whatever Kumari said, but he is convinced. I do not know master, these are all serious things. We are common people, I know how to bring fish from the river, carry on my head and sell with two rupees margin that is all. In the evening, if any fish remain unsold after getting profit of ten rupees, clean it for curry our day's business gets completed". He narrated the reality. This is also the reality of Banjara tribe. Every evening male and female without any hesitation drink toddy. Kumari immediately goes back to his childhood memory. He was begging ten paisa to play gambling with his play mates who are playing head-tail with coin. His mother who was collecting each paisa to purchase two bottles toddy was denying money. He steals some ragi in one corner of his shirt and moves out of the house without his mother's knowledge and sells in Pandi's shop. Sometimes, his mother gives him five to six kilograms of grain to sell for money for her toddy. He lies for some money. When there was acute shortage of dates tree for toddy, contractors used powder to prepare toddy which was dangerous. Karnataka government imposed ban on toddy. Kumari's

mother was habituated for toddy. Addicted Pannibai thought that she will not live without alcohol. She started drinking arrack pockets. Initially she was consuming one and half packet which was not sufficient to the body. Hence she started one and half with one pocket brought by Kumari's father. She was seriously suffering from Blood pleasure and joint pains. When arrack and pressure combine they lead to quarrel everyday in a joint family. Everyday there will be a new issue. One day both father and mother quarrled for silly reason. Some time with elder daughter-in-law, next younger almost it became regular. Kumari was really upset with his drunkard parents. House became Kurukshetra war field, because of the reason he disliked home. So he stayed back in city. How long he could stay without money. One of his roommates Ghougle a Jain by religion helped him, when he was in Karnataka Arts College. Because of his highest percentage in twelfth standard he got admission at Uday hostel, where three were admitted in room but five students stayed. B.com, student Mavapan Lakha, and one Mr Kamble. The only son to his parent Ghougle has good property. He understood the financial crisis of Kumari. On Sunday's, normally the hostel mess is closed. Students have to look after their own dinner. Mr. Ghougle forces Kumari to accompany him at Uday hostel circle. Sometimes all the six go to Netra hotel which is in Uday hostel circle. They normally go with hostel chapathis wrapped in a paper and purchase non-vegetarian curry. Mr. Ghougle and other three order for drink. They persuade Kumari to drink. He politely denies by saying 'thanks '. He remembered his past. His brothers struggle to educate him during his college days. If he starts drinking, he may get addicted for that, he will lose interest in studies. That cautioned him. "What are you thinking sir? Are you listening to me here, I am here". The boy called. "Oh, no, nothing I am fine, just I remembered my past that is all". He tries to convince him. "Now tell me master, whose house you want to go? I will give right direction. Because you know there are many dogs". He narrates the situation "it is ok; I know the house, I will go

myself thanks for the concern". He replied. They already reached the raised mound and the old tamarind trees. While crossing the down of water outlet, unknowingly a feeling of fear came to him. Kumari's memory reminds him; many times his mother used to tell him. "No my son, do not go near the old tamarind trees. They are ghosts hunted. Evening and mid-night ghosts arise, if some go there in that moment, certainly they will be caught". She made it a story, the same opinion fixed in his mind. He was so deeply involved in his past that, Naga took leave from him, but he mechanically said bye later on turned round to see the boy. The boy had already disappeared but his voice of cry was heard. "Fish, do you want? Freshly caught in Tungabhadra River, anybody want?" The voice is fading. Some two three strange faces glanced and stared at him. He identifies them and wished. "You are our Kumari" one fellow fumbled "Yes I am Kumari" replied and moved further. The big hut, once replaced Mangalore red tiles is silent. There was noise like a crowd, mother where are you, Kumari, Pamadi, get up you are late, the sun will rise bullocks will get tired go to the field and cultivate land. The sound of buttermilk churning, everything is silent now. After his mother's death, he was fed up with his family and left his village. He tried to remember those days of sufferings. Panibai lived six to seven years bed ridden due to paralysis stroke. All the three younger brothess and Gothanaik were together in half portion of the big house. Another half was given to the eldest son. Pamadi who planned to live with two three brothers left the idea and settled in the city. Gothanaik was very much worried about his wife Panibai, nobody is peeping towards them. Kumari tried a lot to recover her and bring into normal position. First six months, though she got paralyzed, she was all right speaking, identifying people. Kumari brought some massage oil from Ankola where Ghandhiji was cured. But his mother was not ready to leave alcohol. She just recovered from first stroke; her elder son brought a packet of alcohol and mutton curry. It was followed by his brothers. On Depavali day, all the four

brought four packets and poured into the glass, whether their intension was to kill or affection, nobody knows. Late night at twelve, there was a second stroke. Now she became unconscious and stopped recognizing people. Her tongue had fallen and she lost her speech. She was just like a mummy. Kumari and his younger brother Peku, used to clean her sari, twice, thrice in a week with all pain they used to take their mother out of the house to bathe her. The whole atmosphere was stinking; they used phenyl and other chemicals to clean. Sometimes Kumari cleaned his mother's clothes. After eight years of survival, she got third stroke and went to comma. Eight days she survived without food and water. At last she completed her journey on the earth. Kumari felt sorry for those who were artificial in expression. On her death bed nobody has come, today everybody is crying like that they have cared her at maximum level. All his brother's wives are shedding crocodile tears.

His mother's body was burnt in their field which was purchased by Gothanaik. Next day Kumari disappeared. He cut off all the links. The only person who was much worried about him was his father Gothanaik. Every evening he remembered his son. He lost his long sight; nobody is ready to take him to Dr. Modi, an eye specialist who was treating poor on free of cost. Peku does not know much about the city. Pamadi who was once a favorite child of father, after division, he stopped coming to village Kakapur, not even he tried to enquire his father's health, his last sister's marriage etc. If anybody asks regarding his last sister, he just changes the track. Now Gotha realized who is who. Those who flurt may be because of his position and strength in the society. His sons also tried to flurt and have good positions in the family. Pamadi was first to do so. When man loses his strength, position and age even dog will not care. He was alone; all his contemporaries have died long back due to over drink. Gotha requested god to send him death. But god might have forgotten him. "So many young people have died in the village, O, god of death Yama send your servants to

take me to the heaven". He reveried many a time in his bed. "Peeku, have you sent message to your elder brother Kumari. Where is he? He has to come to Kakapur to look after you and your sister. She attained marriage able age; villagers are talking nonsense about her. I am helpless what to do". Every night before sleep, he asks these questions to his last son. Peeku feels irked and slipps off.

Kumari was just glancing the village. The gigantic neem tree at the center of the village was cut off. Guddamma temple tree also got dried at half part. He remembered from the East he bowed head to the elders who ever appear in his way to take their blessings at the end of the last house of Kalu he gets relieved. His mother was insisting "Come on son! take blessings of uncle, aunt, granee, grandpa at fifty times he has to kneel down. "Mother is it necessary to have blessings of all these people". Several times Kumari asked his mother. "Yes my son, sometimes their blessings will rescue you". He stopped for a moment, when he felt that this is a dream and he moved further. "Yes this was the house where the old lady Kakuni was living. I used to visit her house because there was a beautiful girl living in the opposite house. Whenever I come here regularly I used to visit Kakuni who was a keep of an old man, who was wise enough and teaching Kolata dance to the village folk. Nobody knows the whereabouts of Kakuni. Some people say that she got married to a farmer who was already married and had children, disappointed Kakuni exiled from that village. She got attracted to that man who sings melodiously. That wise old man also ruined her. His wife Honni attacked his new set up Kakuni. "If you keep eye on my husband, I will remove your eye balls mind it you bitch". Kakuni did not care; she started a petty hotel for her livelihood. Gradually two or three hotels were started; old lady has to stop preparing breakfast like, wet puffed rice, vada and mirchi. Kakapur village people are very smart. They keep an account in one hotel, when the owner pressurizes. they leave him and become regular customers to the new hotel. They

want to taste breakfast in all hotels. After some days, they feel that the old wine is better and come back. In her early thirties, Kakuni was very beautiful. She disturbed the night sleeps of many Banjaras. At last she liked an old man, who is of Valmiki by caste and remained with him till her olden days. She liked Kumari very much; his mother and father were her old customers. She was a good friend and adviser to Panibai. Both were drinking toddy almost every evening. So many times they directly go to Damuga's hut shop behind the raised mound of the tank.

The other reason is that she does not have children and Kumari was studying in a city. She liked him like her own son. He has a permanent seat on the other side of the pyol in front of her house. He occupies that seat, because of the beautiful girl who lives in the front house. She gives a smile, Kumari has seen many girls in the city but he has not seen such a simple beauty. He admired her beauty both of them were talking only with eyes. He never proposed to her. Fed up girl, one day invited him to her field. There also she did not express her inner urge, he also did not disclose anything. As long as he used to live in Kakapur, he visits Kakuni's house. Somebody had doubt; Kumari might have fallen in love with that girl. That did not happen, because Kumari was very particular regarding his career. He learnt importance of education and how it should be achieved by the proverb uttered by an illiterate drunkard brute. Gamnaik, whose children were in small government jobs. Once, Kumari met him near his house. Gamnaik asked "What are you doing Kumari"? Very reluctantly. Kumari replied politely "I am doing my graduation". Next question is 'Where'? he asked. Before he could answer Gamnaik replied "You know Kumari, to get education is achievement, to have money one has to be careful in spending it". Gamnaik was right. Kumari learnt it very soon and accordingly he transformed his personality. From the beginning, he dedicated to himself his studies. Though Mr Gogule, Rmevya, Mavapau and others were drinking alcohol and persuading him to drink, he never

consumed. The two things haunted him most are poverty and Gamanaik's advise.

Kumari felt bad for the branch of Goddess Guddamma's neem tree was cut off. That was the branch on which most of village boys used to jump, while playing monkey on the tree. Most of the old people used to drowse under the other side of the branch, which was giving shadow. His mother used to take rest in the afternoon and at night with her grand children lay down under the cool breeze of the neem tree. The other one extended towards his house. Those were the days when without any fear the villagers used to sleep outside. Every summer, winter even in rainy season people used to sleep outside the house. He still remembered that night. The village was divided into two after grampanchayat elections. Gothaniak's son Pamadi contested with the support of non-Banjaras of Kakapur, Huseni, Anandani and many other Kannadigas and Mulims openly supported him. But Banjaras were united against Pamadi. Kishna's son Soma, Pujari's son Babya and others took the issue very serious. They prepared one point agenda to defeat Pamadi. Among 400 votes, three hundred votes are of Banjaras, remaining one hundred non-Banjaras. The equation Pamadi and others calculated was wrong. All voters came to Pamadi's house, ate millet-pan cake and rice but voted Kishna's brother Boiya. When results were out, Pamadi was defeated. That was the first failure in Gothanaik's family. Gothanaik was worried about the future of his children. He knew that Pamadi is very short tempered; hence, it is obvious that people might have rejected him. Identity question of Gotha was aroused. He understood that his children will not rule Kakapur as he ruled, days are changing, people rejected his family; why all these happened they have to introspect themselve. Gotha tried to console himself. He went to Byamagas arrack shop to drink heavily and started abusing in the midst of the village. Nobody replied.

Kakpur was en marked, Gotha and non-Banjaras versus the other clan Banjaras of the village. The environment of

the village got tensed after the election. Both the sides, people were waiting for a small reason to blow up the issue. But the fire charcoal was burning under the ash. Yes, Kumari still remembered that black moon day. The opponents have organized Gondaliga's play. It is a kind of art narrative. Two or three people with tanpur and other instruments narrate the stories of Chitrasheka and Somasheka who are the oral epic heroes of the Gondaliga. The upper street people were preparing their beds for sleep. The down street people were involved in the Gondaliga play. Old village priest Papuganaik had been to have booze at the neighboring village. Because Kumari and his team of educated youngsters protested selling alcohol in Kakapur long back. The result was that the arrack shop at Kakapur was banned. Those who wished to drink they have to go to the village two kilometers away from Kakapur which is built on the other side of the village tank. All addicted women cursed Kumari who was the leader of that team. Old priest Papuga also cursed the young people of Kakapur because they made him to walk two kilometers.

It was dark just after sunset at down of Sarthihill. Kakapur village people had dinner just then. Some old people were holding betal leaves to keep in their mouths; some have lit Fiaz beedies and just had one puff. There was strange voice heard. "Protect me, I am dying". The voice was not identified immediately, but heard clearly due to the silence of the night. "Mother, I am dying protect me" again and again the voice was heard clearly. A team of young Turks, talking nonsense about the village girls heard this voice. Shelta the leader of the group said, "Is it not the voice heard, someone is crying". He gave a pause, "Listen" he repeated. Chikka said "Yes, it is coming from south direction. Means near the old tamarind tree where Brahmarakasa is resinding oh! Today is dark moon day, it is time to appear. Yes, it is true brother that man will die", confidently replied. Shelta did not wait for a moment. "Come on run" they forgot everything, sharp stones, thorn bare footed ran hither and

thither." Move, before the demon kills him". Shelta encouraged. Voice of the old priest was shrinking. "Help, demon is taking me". People who heard the voice also ran to rescue him. Since the tank was dry, people ran in to the tank to reach the old tamarind tree which is near the peapla tree. Boys, who first reached, exaggerated the whole scene in a horrible way. "Demon was lifting him; his body was floating in the air. You know, it was taking him behind the bush to kill him". Shelta narrated this to terrorise the whole mass. Innocent villagers believed this. Some of them shared their experience. "Yes, this spot is dangerous. That old demon living since ages. I do not know why that is living but did nothing". Old Kakutanaik retorted. We have to do something to drive that demon. Many voices rose. How can we, helpless human being. So only Lord Hanuman who is sitting in the outskirts of the village can do this. He is the one who helped Rama to kill Ravana. Many stories have been narrated colorfully. But Kumari knows the reality. The old priest Papuga heavily boosed arrack. While leaving the shop he was out of control. He was unable to walk straight, moved left and right. Somehow he managed to reach the spot. When he reached old tamarind tree, immediately he remembered what people say regarding brahmarakasa, he completely lost control on his body due to fear. While moving right to left, the other side slope where gravel is slippery he slipped down and moved deep into the cactus bush. Woke up immediately, again collapsed. He could not wake up again, crawled up and shouted loudly. There was bleeding at his knees and scares at temple, cheek and elbows are proving that he is the worst boozed. If he tries to disclose this, he will be a big fool. The whole crowd will laugh at him, thinking that he is a learned idiot who is an atheist. They will narrate hundreds of stories, how Jamba naik once found lamb in the dark. Poor fellow holds that on his shoulders. When he turned his head, he saw that lamb was growing towards sky. Jamba threw down the lamb and escaped from the ordeal. There are thousands of stories each

villager heard. He did not say anything, instead he showed interest.

Kumari came out of the past, meanwhile he reached his house. It was dusk, there is a small kerosene lamp burning in the corner. His sister cooking food at the right corner, his father was sitting in another corner remembering his past. He has short sight, looking at blank, he heard the noise, and called "who is that", his younger brother who was laid on the floor woke up. "Brother Kumari, my conscience was telling that you will be coming soon". He started weeping. His sister left her work came running and hugged him and started crying, "Brother where were you all these days? do you know how much we missed you. Every day father was remembering". She started snubbing. "No dear, why are you crying? I am here to look after you. Do not get disheartened I have returned for you people no, no". He wiped tears. He goes near his father. "Father, you became so lean, why have you lost your health? I know how all your pet children ruined you. But I am still alive to take care of you". He holds his hand in his hands. He had no tears to shed. "I do not know my son, why I am living. All my friends have died. Why is god delaying my death"? There was a real urge of death in his tone. "No father, why are you feeling that, I am here to drive out all your problems now onwards". He consoled him. "I do not know my son; I am just waiting for you to handover the responsibility of your younger brother and sister to you and close my eyes forever". His voice shrilled. Kumari did not control his emotion. Many of his old friends dropped in. They all felt happy that their friend at lost returned. They enquired each and everything including his present job.

Kumari asked about his six brothers. Tukka, Pamadi and their children. His sister narrated little what she knows about them. "What happened to the tractor father had purchased". Kumari asked, "That, Pamadi, brought some customers, took some money and sold". She narrated the whole episode to him. This was the home which was filled

with people. Now it is deserted, ruined almost. Kumari walked inside the house, it is an emotional journey. He tries to hear his inner voice. His mother was calling him "Kumari beta Kumari come and have your dinner the bowl is getting dry". His eyes started scanning the spot. "Mother, mother, where are you mother"? He remained a while. His heart was numb with sorrow. That was a wonderful moment to him. He remained motionless. When his brother Peeku shook him and awaked. "Oh, ya, I am alright". The situation suffocated him. He went outside.

Kumari struggled hard to adjust with the environment. Thanda is totally changed, Uncompleted degree holders have emerged as new leaders. Hatiinaik, Karbari and Davo lost their position in Banajara community. Elections divided nucleus family into fractions. Husband belongs to one party and wife is in another party. Children are in third front. Toddy shops are transformed into arrack to control the premature deaths of the young people whose wives are widows and spoiling the life of even small kids. At least twenty widows are struggling for their existence both economically and sexually in Kakapur.

Kumari had witnessed how his maternal uncle's daughter Gandhi became a widow. Her husband Moranaik, morning drunk toddy, at twelve he had arrack, evening he consumed brandy. Again he went back to street for drinking toddy, on the way he took some tobacco snuff and brushed to the teeth. The tobacco dust entered his glottis, breath was choked and died on the spot. Gandhi became widow. Twenty widows have different stories in thanda. They have not even spared a small boy in thanda. Now the arrack shops are transformed into brandy shops. There is a bidding to start a shop in thanda. Jingalunaik's widow Ramki offered the highest bid and had contract of Rupees one and half lakh; she has to earn this money in the margin of the bottle. Lambani saries have disappeared and nighty culture has started. Gobi manchuri, noodle, egg fried rice and other items are available in the street of the village.

His father became dumb spectator and watching all ups and downs in the village. If he gets some money, asked his son to bring half bottle of khoday's rum. Even fourteen year children who go to the coffee estate, also consume alcohol. There is no respect to the panchayat, elders and the learned in the village. It is like a true democracy. All are equal.

Kumari has just witnessed everything. He got severe headache, He goes to the place normally he visits whenever he goes to his village. He got relaxed. The sun was setting after his day's duties. It was a pleasant evening spent some time and returned, He heard a whistle round blown by his brother Peeku, "Father is serious he is calling you" He ran fast.

Gothanaik was counting seconds "Father , I am Kumari please open your eyes, talk something, nothing will happen to you , see I am here, Father" He blinked his eyes, tried to talk , but did not speak, eyes opened slightly and head got collapsed in Kumari 's hand. But the gesture was towards his two unmarried children. After a lot of struggle, Gothanik tried to establish his own domain in a place where his father had migrated. Except the few good people, most of the people criticized him as an 'emigrant'. Gothanik now remains in the history.

Kumari who holds the responsibility of Karmthot, Gothanaik's clan struggling hard to keep his father's name alive. He failed to settle down in the village; he returned to the city, built a house in an extension area. Put the names of his father and mother 'Pani Gothanilaya'. His children now and then remember their grandparents, he does not have a portrait to show them that they look like this. But he had their foolscap size portrait in his heart and mind which never fades out.

# Goarmati
## An Unending Journey

**Dr. Shantha Naik**, Associate professor and Chairman Department of English and Dean Arts faculty at Vijayanagara Sri Krishna Devaraya University Ballari, is a creative writer. He has written novels and plays in Kannada language. He has edited many collections of articles in English on different issues. Some of his works are well appreciated and well received by the public. His play Patragalu (Charaters) got B.V. Karant prestigious award. He has got Patil Puttappa award, Mskeri M.K Naik award etc.. Dr. Naik is a first Banjara writer who is documenting the realities of Banjara tribe. He is involved in preparing Banjara Culture and Language Dictionary in English, Kannada, and Hindi languages. His Feminist Psyche in World Women Novelist, Teaching English Language through Literature, Dalit Discourse and many other works are well received in the academic circle.

The tussle between nomadic nature and settlement is the base of this novel. Gothanaik the first generation nomad migrated from original place and tried to settle down in a village Kakapura. He faces much opposition within the vicinity of his caste. The displacement of Banjaras lead their attitude towards civilization into confusion. Getting civilized and gaining literary knowledge are the challenges to Banjaras. Gotha's second son Pamadi who struggles to pass matriculation is a mark of difficulty to get educated. His sixth son Kumari's university education is a mark of progress. Banjara tribe had a metamorphosis in their lives. When British rulers had banned entry into the forest, they lost their control over the forest and forest products as well. This metamorphosis leads them to accept some odd jobs like labors, road construction, building work and agriculture. They are experts to climb hillocks carrying heavy bags of coffee seeds. Now they are experts in cutting sugarcane. Hence the novel Goarmati-An Unending Journey exposes all these realities about Banjaras. From Gotha Naik to Kumari, it is an interesting journey of life in Banjara tribe.

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